

¶ **Prælections vpon
the Sacred and holy
Reuelation of S. John,**
written in latine by William
Fulke Doctor of Diuinitie,
and translated into English by
George Wyllard:

(.r.)

IOAN. 21. vers. 24.

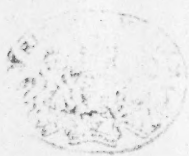
¶ *This is the Disciple which beareth
witness of these things, and whiche
wrote these things, and we know that
his testimonie is true.*

¶ Reuel. 22. vs. 8.

¶ **I am John which sawe and heard
these things.**

¶ **Imprinted at Lon-
don, by Thomas Purfoote, at
the signe of the Lucrece.**

Anno. 1573.



A

TO THE RIGHT HO-
norable and noble Lorde Ambrose
Dudley, Earle of VVarwike,

Baron Lisle, generall of the Q. Maiesties
Ordinance, and Knight of the most no-
ble order of the Garter.

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THE lyfe of man (right
Honorable) is sayd of the holy man
Iob to be a continuall warfare on
earth: wherby it is euident, that so
long as we remayne in the taberna-
cle of this fleshe, we are euen in the
middest of this difficulte and daun-
gerouse fighte, compassed in on e-
uerye syde withe huge Armies of
seyrce and cruell enemies, and also subiecte at euery momēt
to the furiose assaults and inuasions of stronge and subtil
aduersaries. As the holy Apostle S. Paule witnesseth Ephes. 6.
That we wastle not againste fleshe and bloud, but againste
principalities, against powers, and against the worldly gouer-
nours, the Princes of the darckenesse of this world, against
spirituall wickednesses which are in the highe places. Being
therefore so weake and feble of our selues, that we are alto-
gether vnable to resist or to stand in battaill, and encounter
with so mightie stout Champions as these, namely that old
serpent with all the whole rablement of the hellishe Armye,
which by long practise are so experte, that there subtkie is
more to be feared then there power: the holy ghost warneth
all those that wil be the true souldiours of Christ, to put on
all the armour of God: as to haue there loynes gyrded about
with veritie, hauing on the brest plate of righteousness, and
to haue there feete shood with the preparation to the Go-
spell of peace, to take the shield of faith, and the sword of the

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Spi-

The Epistle.

Spirite, the helmet of Saluation. All which spirituall weapōs, the Lord doth minister vnto vs by his holy woorde. And our sauour Christ as a moste mightie Captaine, by his example hath taught all his souldiours howe they shall vse the same to the vanquishinge of Sathan. But the malice of the deuill wrought so effectuously in the corrupt nature of mā: that by the meanes of his generall Vīcar Antichrist, for a longe space of time, he had almost quite banished these spirituall weapōs and Christian armour, and brought in a great number of his owne framing, which are so farre vnite or vnable to repell the violence of his fyerie dartes, that of themselues they giue deadly woundes vnto all those that put or repose any confidence in them. For of them selues (whatsoeuer they seeme to be) they are nothing els to the soules of men, but deadly poison. And yet notwithstandinge, the blindness of the worlde through the iust iudgement of God: For the cōtempt of his holy word, was such, that being made drunckē with the abominatiōs of Antichrist, it rāne a whoring after strange Gods, and in such filthie maner, that fully it hath bene verified in the which the Lord doth greuously complayne of by his Prophete saying, my people haue cōmitted two euils: they haue forsakē me the fountayn of liuing waters to digge to the selues pits eue b'rokē pits, that can hold no waters, yea this madnes proceeded so farre and the corruptions of Antichrist were so depely roted in the hartes of men, that euen vnto this daye, althoughe the Lord in great mercye by placinge a noble and vertuous Prince to raigne ouer vs, which hath set vp and maintayned his holy woorde, hath outwardly banished them, they remaine still in the mindes of the people: but whereto maye this be imputed, that in all places almost of this Realme, the greater parte beare more fauour to the monstrous proceedinges of the man of sinne, then to the pure Gospell of Iesus Christ: but that they are kepte in such ignorance and blindness, that they haue not tasted of the power of Gods word. For this hath alwaies bene and is the craftie policie of the Deuill, when as hee can not whollye stoppe the course of the Gospell, yet that he may make it the
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Dedicatore.

lesse fruitfull, to indeuour by all meanes possible euen to entangle the ministers thereof in the vaine pleasures of this world, with couetousnes & ambition, that therby they may become more studious, to set forth there owne glorye, then to aduance the glory of Christ, more carefull to erect and garnishe there owne bowers, then to builde vp the house of the Lorde. The miserable experience of oure time is an euident profe hereof. For out of what other founteyne haue all the mischeifes of latter time flowed, in this our Realme of Englande? But that the carelesnes in feedinge the Lords flocke hath bene so greate, that in mosse places eather raueninge wolues, or els suche lewde vnskilfull blinde guides as are not able to gouerne them selues, in stead of true pastors are made gouernours in the church, and haue the rule ouer the flocke of Christ, so that it is no greate meruaile, that the people in some places of this realme, for want of good instruction not knowinge there duty to God set themselves in armour to rebell againste the minister of God, there Soueraigne Prince. Thus Antichrist by meanes of ignorance the mother of deuillish deuotion, seducinge the people into sundrye errors dothe mayntaine his bloudye kingedome. For if his subtil practices were disclosed, and his abominations made manifest, there is no doubt but that the greatest part of those that haue there mindes still bewitched with the enchauntementes of that whore, would euen looth and detest her filthines and hate here with a deadly hatred. Now seeinge that the Lorde hath alwaies had such a prouident and fatherly care ouer his Church, that he woulde haue nothinge hid from his electe whiche should tende to there eternall health and saluation, but euen longe before by sendinge his Aungell, reuealed to his seruante, Iohn what subtiltye and cruell tirannye, the deuill by the ministry of Antichriste woulde practice against the saintes the true seruantes of Christ. I thinke the Church should suffer greate iniurye, if it should want or be depriued of the vse of those treasures whiche are conteyned in this prophecie, whiche are so manifolde and so greate (as
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The Epistle

the godly and diligent reader shall finde) that I am farre vn-
able to speake any thing, which may set forth the excellencie
and worthinesse of the same. Which all men must needes con-
fesse, seeing the holy ghost pronounceth them to be blessed,
whiche here and kepe the sayings of the prophecie of this
booke : especially living in these daungerouse and trouble-
some times, wherein the Romish monster, inspired with a deu-
ilish spirite, fearinge the vtter subuersion and ouerthrowe
of his kingdomē rageth so vehemētly, that he vseth all kinde
of falshood and subtile dealinge, yea Barbarouse, and mon-
strouse tyrannie, and all to establishe & maintayne his owne
pride and vsurped auctoritie, he hath oftentimes suche suc-
cesse in warring against the true professours of the Gospell,
that he hathe victorie and sleaeth there bodies, and that in
suche terrible manner, that it might seeme to be a Iust qua-
rill which he mainteyneth, excepte the Lorde had here re-
uealed to his seruante Iohn, that he should thus for a time
preuayle: and that in the ende he will reuenge the bloud of
his Saintes. Againē here is fully aunswered that deuilish and
blinde obiection of the Papistes, which so sore troubleth the
consciēces of the ignorante : namelye that the Churchē of
Rome hauing continued so many hundred yeares, and bene
so generall, and hathe had from time to time a succession of
Byshoppes, and alwaies remayned visible in the eyes of the
worlde, can not be but the true Churchē. On the other syde,
they say that this Churchē of oures was not any where to be
foundē within an hundred or two hundred yeares paste, and
therefore can not be the true Catholike Churchē of Christ.
But let the diligent reader Iudge, of these thinges when he
hath perused this booke: for herein he shall finde euen payn-
ted out before his eyes, the forme and shape both of the true
Churchē, and also of the false, which is the Synagoge of Sa-
than. I mighte stand to reckon vp a great number of the like
commodities, wherewith this prophecie is full, but then I
shoulde bee ouer tedious: and I wishe rather that the dili-
gente Reader should gather them him selfe, which shall not
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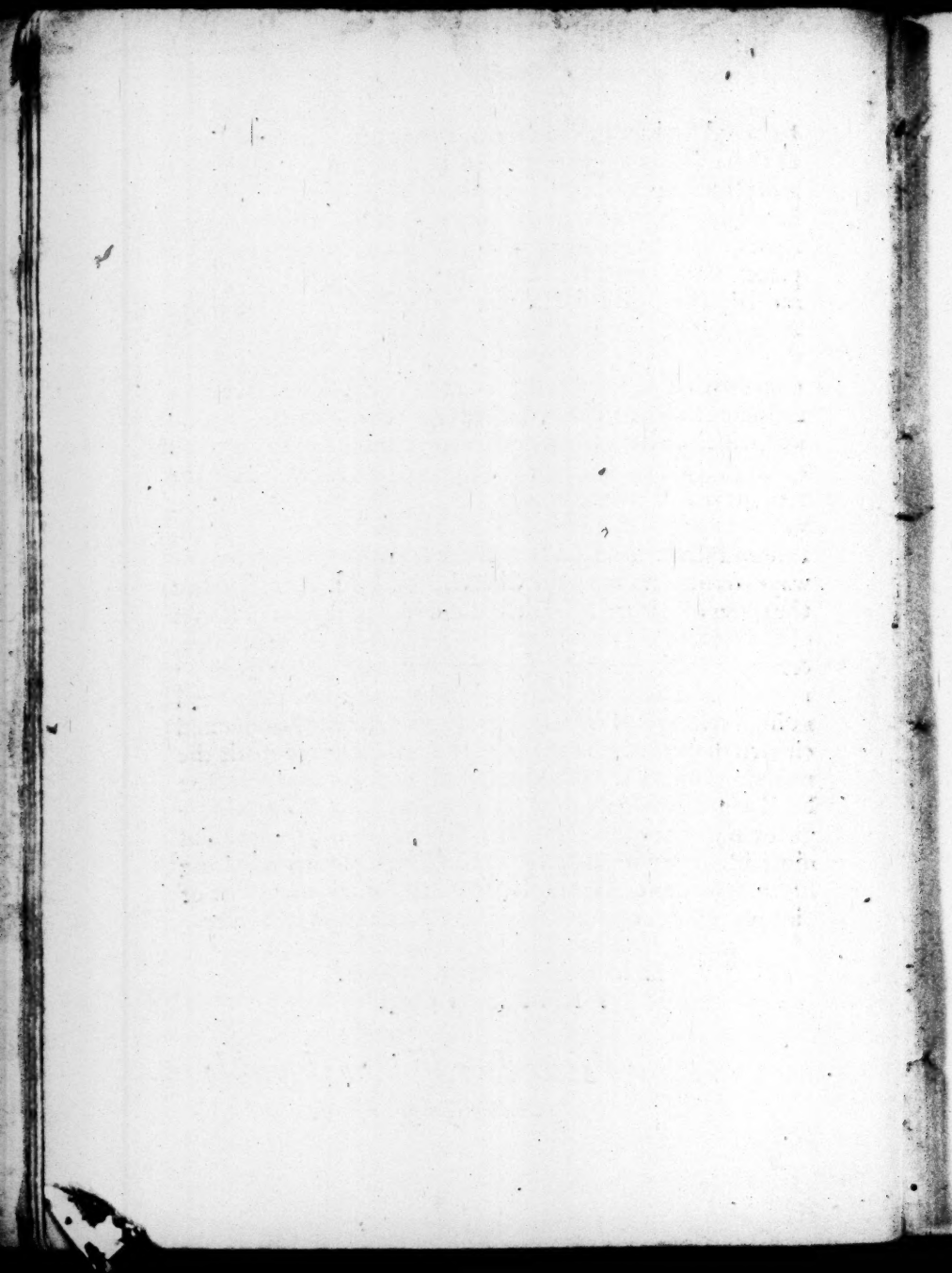
Dedicatorie.

be heard for him to doe: seeinge the authour thereof, as it doth evidently appeare applied him selfe to write briefelye and playnly, not troubling the Reader with any long circumstances, nor yet wading curiously in searching out darcke mysteries, but with modellie, comparing and alluding to other places of the scriptures. Whereby those thinges that seemed most darcke and difficulte to be vnderstood, are made playn and easye. Thus when I had finisshed my labour in translating this booke, I was bolde to dedicate the same vnto your honour, with diuers and fundrie causes & respectes being moued thereto. As considering the great beneuolence and good will, which ye haue towards the Authour hereof, and to all other that are godly learned: adioyning therto especially the feruent zeal & loue towards the Gospell, which God hathe wrought and planted in your harte: with the hatred of Papiſtrie and all other deuiliſh doctrine & errours, which by any wayes or meanes annoy the Church of Christ. These are not the giftes of nature, or of fleshe and bloud, but of the spirite of God, giuen for the mainteyning of his glory here in earth, & for the succouring of his pore afflicted Church, especially in those which for the same end and purpose, he hath placed in high calling and authoritie: whole greatest honour and chiefest dignitie doth consist in this, that they are made the nourcing fathers and nourcing mothers of Gods people. The Lord which hath begunne and wrought these his graciouse giftes in you, continue and increase the same dayly more and more, blesse ye with all spirituall blessings, geue vnto ye long life with increase of Godly honour, to the aduancement of his glorie, the commoditie of his Church, and your eueralting comforte and saluation in Christoure
ſauiour and redeamer. Amen.

FINIS. 1573.

Your Lordshippes humble

Orator George Giffard.



COMMENTARIES OF VVilliam Fulke vpon the holy and sacred Reuelation of Saint Iohn. (.)



Before that saint Iohn
doth enter into the full and iust narra-
tion of the propheticall visions, hee
thought good, to place some thinges
before as in þ way of a p̄face, which
should make to the commendation of
his doctrine, and get auctoritie to his
w̄iting.

Verſ. 1. The reuelation of Ieſus Chriſt.

THIS firſte verſe conteyneth the title of the booke, that it is
þ reuelation of Ieſus Chriſt, which God gaue vnto him, to
this end that he might ſhew his ſeruañtes thoſe thinges which
ſhoulde ſhortly after come to paſſe. It is vſuall amonge all the
prophets, leaſt they ſhould be thought to ſpread abroad among
the commun people the deuifes of there owne brayne, to aſcribe
God as the aucthor of there doctrine, of which ſorte are theſe,
The word of the Lord, The burthē of the word of the lord, &c.
The ſelfe ſame doth ſaint Iohn, in ſaying the reuelatiō of Je-
ſus Chriſt: ſauing this that they do ſimplie alleage god as their
onely aucthor, but this Apoſtle ſheweth Ieſus Chriſt to haue
deliuered thoſe thinges vnto him, which he himſelfe receiued of
the father. And truely ſaint Iohn nourished vp in the cleare
light of the Goſpell, doth ſpeake muche more playnly & ſenſi-
bly vnto vs, thē the prophets which were brought vp vnder
the ſhadowes of Moſes law. For althougħ Chriſt, which is the
eternall wiſdoms of his father, had alwaies this prerogative,
to deliuer forth the heauenly oracles, by whoſe benefite wee
ought to knowledge our ſelues to haue receiued, whatſoener

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good gifts God hath at any time bestowed vpon his Church: yet notwithstandinge it was not so manifest to the fathers in time past vnder the law, as after ꝑ the sone of God tooke our flesh, & manifested him selfe to be beholden of vs vnder ꝑ clere light of ꝑ Gospell, ꝑ vail being taken away. Rightly therefore sayeth Iohn, the reuelation of Iesus Christ, whereby he doth not onely sencer, and distinguish this heauenly doctrine from all deuises of men, but also extolleth the great and most excellent dignitie of our sauoure Iesus Christ, to whome he doth attribute this diuine reuelatiō: which is all one, as if he should say oure flesh to be lifted vp and exalted to so great honour that it should eue be made partaker of gods miseries, which ought not to seme straung, when as Christ placed at the right hand of god, in his fathers steed doth gouerne the Church and moreouer the whole world.

VV Hich God gaue vnto him that he might shew to his seruauentes. &c. The wonderfull goodnesse of God doth here shine forth vnto vs, that he doth vouchsafe to reuels to his Church such great miseries and secretres of thinges to come, neither doth he suffer his seruauentes to be ignorant of any thing, which is any way profitable for them to knowe. Here therefore God is appointed and declared to be the author of this doctrine, Iesus Christ by whose meanes so great a treasure is come vnto vs, to be the mediator, for truely in him which is our head, God doth also imbrace vs which are his bodie, so that we refuse not to be his seruauents, most ready to receyue and obey all his commaundements. Moreouer S. Iohn meaneth not by these woordes, those secretres onely, to be knowne of our sauour Christ, which are declared in this booke (for seeing that he is the wisdom of God no part of the diuine counsaile can be hid from him) but he vnderstandeth that Christ in the persone of the mediator, hath receyued this reuelatiō of the father, that he might communicate the same to his Church. For it is not to be doubted, but that God reuealed also manie thinges by visions to other Apostles and holy men, which should make eyther to their confirmatiō and

reuelation of S. Iohn.

strengtheninge, or els to the admonicion of the Church then present. But he would haue this reuelation onely committed to writing for y^e vse of the whole Church. For like as before the coming of Christ, when doctrine & teaching was more darke & obscure, the Church stood in nede of many reuelations, so after y^e light of the gospell is sprung vp, and hath dispersed and dymien awaie all cloudes & darkenesse, we ought to holde our selues contented with verie few extraordinarie visions. This one therefore, but yet a most excellent reuelatioⁿ the holy ghost thought sufficient for the Church, that he might admonish it of the perils and dangers which it shold passe through. And this is it that Iohn saith, that God gaue this reuelation to Christ that he might declare it to his seruants (Those thinges that shold shortly come to passe.) Although the executioⁿ and fulfilling of many thinges which are fore told of in this booke, should be differred vnto a long tyme after, yet he meaneth that euen then the vilitie and profite of this prophery was to take place, when as by and by after, horrible persecutioⁿs should be stirred vp against the Church by the Romaine Emperours, and euen a little before were begunne to be stirred vp by Nero and Domitian (And sending his angell) He teacheth by whose ministrie this reuelation was brought vnto him, that is by an Angell being sent of Christ who partly by word and partly by signes shewed all these thinges vnto him. And this is no small commendation of this doctrine that Christ sent it from heauen by an angell. That he calleth him selfe the seruant of Christ, it is the same that the other Apostles doe, as Paule, Peter, James and Jude. hee meaneth that he is a seruant of Christ, peculierly ordeyned to the ministrie of the Gospell.

Uers. 2. Who bare record of the woordes of God and of the testimony of Iesu Christ, and of all thinges that he saw.

HE procureth authoritie to this propherie, by the persone of him selfe, bycause that like as God hath ordeyned and appointed him to be a preacher of his gospell, so he hath faithfully discharged the duetie and office committed vnto him: for these two thinges are required in a teacher, first to be lawfull-

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ly called, least any other should rashly intrude, and thrust in him selfe, besides him which is called of the lord, and secondlye to be faithfull, that he may sincerely, diligently and truely execute those matters which are committed vnto him. The Apostle therefore doth signify that his faithfullnesse is alreadye sufficiently knowne and appoyned to the Churches, because it is he which alwaies here to foze with great faithfullnesse and constancie, hath testified and professed the woorde of God and the gospell of Iesus Christ, whereby they may lesse doubt but that he will now also deliuer and bring a perfect, sounde, and vncorrupted propheticall vision, sent downe to him from heauen. So he saierh in the ende of the gospell which he writ. The same discipule is he which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things, and wee knowe that his testimonye is true.

Wers. 3. ¶ Happy is he that readeth, and happy are they that heare the wordes of this prophesy & kepe those things which are writen therein for the time is at hande.

HE commendeth this doctrine by the great profite & commoditie that it bringeth, that it doth not for a short time delight those that are studious in the same, with a vaine, coloured and paynted eloquence of wordes, according to the maner of prophane writings, but it maketh the altogether happy and blessed for euermore. which thing although it may well & truly be spoken of all the whole sacred scripture & of euerie booke of the same, yet it is euident that S. Iohn speaketh here onely of his owne prophesy. For that he sayeth the time is at hande, he admonisheth the faithfull, if they will take anye fruite thereof, that they oughte to giue them selues diligently to the meditation and studie of this prophesy, least the perils and daungers now presently hanging ouer their heades, they liuing securely and carelesly, should oppresse the vnwares. But rather being instructed in the doctrine of this prophesy, they may be able to stande strongly agaynst all the violent, force, fraude, and deceipt of the aduersarie. And here is the singuler loue of God and of our sauour Christ towardes
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reuelation of S. Iohn.

des his Church commended vnto vs, ouer which he hath so prouident a care, that the faithfull may not onely be admonished of the daungers and euils hanging ouer there heades, but also þ way & meanes may be shewed, by which they may not onely eschew the euils, but also put them selues in possession of true and perfecte blessednesse. If they will diligently exercise themselves in meditating vpon this prophecy, and in keeping and obseruing those thinges that are witten and conteyned in thesame, whereby it shall come to passe, that they may be prepared to receyue and resist all the assaultes of Satan, and may quietly triumphe and haue the victorie, euen in the middest of the daungerous waues and floudes of mischiefe and iniquite.

Verf. 4. ¶ Iohn to the seuen Churches which are in Asia.

Saint Iohn warned by the holy ghost writeth to seuen of the most famous Churches of Asia the lesser, to whose keeping he was commaunded to committe the great treasure of this prophecy, that by there saythfull ministry it might be preserved and kept, and spread ouer the whole worlde.

¶ Grace and peace. &c.

Accordyng to the custome and manner of the other Apostles, he wisheth vnto them grace and peace: Grace that is the free fauour of god, that he would vouchsafe to embrace them with his so tender loue and compassion, from whence floweth and springeth this peace, that is the happy and prosperous successe of all thinges, whiche god is accustomed to graunt to those, whom he doth acknowledge for his children.

¶ From him which is, and which was, and which is to come.

He craveth and desireth this grace and peace of hym which onely can gyue the same, that is of the eternall god, whiche in all ages doth remaine the selfe same & like him selfe, to whō (as saith saint James) there is no mutatio or chaunge, neither any shadow of alteration, whiche as he is now, and alwayes hath bene, so shall he for ever and ever continue a patrone and myghty defender of his Church.

¶ And

¶ And

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¶ And from the seuen spirites which are before his throne.

IT is the office and worke of the holy ghost to scale and esteeme grace and peace in the hartes of the faithfull, no meruaile it is therefore, though he desire the same from the holy spirite to be giuen vnto the Churches. But this doth trouble some men, that for one spirite, hee sayeth seuen spirites, for howsoeuer the giftes be diuers, yet one spirite worketh all in all. *1. Corin. 12.* But we must vnderstand *¶* the Apostle speaketh here according to the vision shewed vnto him, which he expreth in the fourth chapter and first verse, where there do appeare seuen lampes of fire burning before the throne which are the seuen spirites of God, which doth no more take away the vnitie of the holy ghost, then those fiery tongues, which sat vpon euery one of the Apostles, in the second of the Actes. That he placeth seuen spirites before the throne, he signifyeth that those heauenly giftes, which are the effectes and workings of the holy ghost, doe descend vnto vs from no other then from the most high father of light which is the aucthor and giuer of all good thinges.

Verf. 5. ¶ And from Iesus Christ, which is a faithfull witnesse & first begotten of the dead & prince of the kings of the earth.

Seing there is but one onely mediator betwene God and man, euen Iesus Christ which alone hath pacified his fathers wrath towardes vs: not without great cause. *S. John* desireth and craueth grace and peace at his hands, which hath brought vs agayne into the fauour of God, and by his death hath established true and perfect peace, betwixte God and mankinde. In that the Apostle in this place doth so beautifie and adorne our sauour Christ, with diuers excellent commendations of dignitie and praise, he doth it to this ende that the greater reuerence, and authorite might be giuen to this reuelation which he receiued of Christ. First therefore he calleth him a faithfull witnesse, that is one that testifieth the trueth, which hath bene accustomed to deliuer nothing to his church but that which he hath drawne out from the sacred and holy bosome of his Father: where vpon he him selfe sayeth, *my doctrine*

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ctrine is not mine but his that sent me. Wee therefore whiche doth deminish the faithfulness and truth of this his testimony, doth accuse the truth it selfe of vntrueth and lying. neither shall his so great blasphemie against the sonne of God escape unpunished. To this end also he is called & first begotten of the dead, and prince of the kinges of the earth: whereby his most high and soueraygne auctoritie and power, which he hath both ouer the quicke and the dead is approued, as he which ouercomming death and triumphing ouer all his enemies, hath obteyned the chiefe Empire & gouernement both in heauen and earth. To whome now being risen and returned from death, and exalted into the height of glory and maiestie, if we do not giue due credit and reuerence, we are altogether vnworthie to enioye any benefite of his deathe and passion, or vpon whome he should bestowe and impart any sparke of his glorie. Vnto him which, &c. whē he fallerh into mentis of the benefites of Christ he cannot withhold himself, from celebratting his grace with worthie praise and commendations, which wee knowe Sainct. Paule doeth almost alwaies, as oft as he was dyatone into the consideration of the same grace. And truely we are moze then blackish, if at the remembraunce of so great benefites, we be not wholly turned in to thankes geuing and celebrating of his diuine glorie. We doth also admonish vs, that euen the onely remembrance of the benefites of Christ ought to suffice among all godly men, that the auctoritie of this doctrine should be sacred and holy.

Vers. 6. Which loued vs and washed vs from our sinnes in his blood, and made vs Kinges and priestes to god, euen his father to him be glory and dominion for evermore. Amen.

HE appoinerh the loue of Christ to be the beginning of our redemption, which for this cause is after a meruailouse sort commended vnto vs, that when we were his enemies he refused not to washe away all the filthy sportes of our sinnes euen with his owne precious blood, and to brynge vs agayne into the fauour of God his father, and not this only, but also of wretched miserable, & abiect, bondslaves of Sathan, of prophane

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phane and vnpure contemners of God, by his benefite he hath exalted and lifted vs vp to a kingly honoure and dignitie, and priestly holynes. Seing he hath made vs partakers & heyers of his kingdome, and hath consecrated vs priests to offer spirituall sacrifices to god, to him worthele be all praise glorie and dominio for euermore. Amen. But here the papistes haue to consider, which study by all meanes to deminish and make lyght the benefite of the death of Christ, wheras the Apostell dooth attribute all y^e maye be thereto, as remission of sinnes, kingly and priestly honour wherewith Christians are exalted, he acknowlegeeth to be receiued only by Christ.

Vers. 7. ¶ Behold he cometh with clouds and euery eye shall see him yea euen they which haue pearced him through, and all kindreds of the earth shall waile before him.

Euen so. Amen.

HE proceedeth forward in the same argument, that he might get credit to his prophetic, shewing that none can safely and without danger, despise this doctrine, seing yt came fro him whiche shall come to iudge the quicke and the deade, and shall take vengeance vpon the wicked despisers of god. In that he saith he shall come in the cloudes, he setteth forth the glory of his cominge, as well to terrify and beate downe the haunte stomackes of the wicked, as to the lyftringe vp of the mindes of the godlye into the hope of blessed redemption, as in the. 24. of Math. *And euery eye shall see him. &c.* No man can flye from his presence, for euen the wicked wyl they nill they shalbe brought into the presence of there iudge, and those that woulde most of all withdrawe and hide them selues, yea they whiche pearced him, and handled him moste despitefully, shall euen againste there willes bee drawen forth into his presence. Furthermore all the kindreds of the earth which do so scornfully and proudly reiect and despise all his gouernment, shall then but all to late, with great sorow acknowledge, howe unhappely they conspired together to reiect and cast of his yoke, whose iudgment they are compelled to receiue and enter into vntwillinglye.

Euen

Euen so Amen. He confirmeth the former sentence with a double affirmation in Breake and Brewe, that he may commend the certainte of the same. For there is nothing moze easy to prophane persons then to deride our hope that we haue of the seconde comming of Christ and to delight and sport the selues, the meane whiles in their delicate pleasures. But at length they shall proue by experience to there great hurt, that this promise is not in vaine. when as all the tribes of the earth in desperate maner shal betwaille them selues ouer him. So John doth also expresse with how seruent prayers, all the godly ought to desire the comming of that daye, when as all the wicked being thowen downe, Christ shall haue his perfect glorie.

Uers. 8. I am alpha and Omega, that is the beginning and the ending sayeth the Lorde, which is, and which was and which is to come, the almightie. I say.

Las telye he beautifieth and setteth forth the excellence and worthines of this prophetic, in this, that it is his whiche is the beginning, and the ende, eternall and almightie, whome also (that the auctoritie maye be the greater) hee bringeth in speaking in his owne person I am the Alpha and Omega, alpha in the Grecians prouetbe, which is also in vse among latin writers, signifieth the first, and by the same reason Omega signifieth the last. The beginning and the ende, of whome all creatures tooke there beginning, which viles they should be kepte from destruction by his secret vertue & power, they would euery moment vanish away and consume to nothing, which thing although it shold come to passe, yet no part of his diuine maiestie should be thereby diminished. For howsoener all creatures be subject to alteration and change, God alone is free from all vnstablennesse. It remayneth therefore if wee wilbe happy and blessed, y we cleane wholly to him, because y about him we shall finde nothing but corrupcion & destruction. Which is, That is eternall, vnhangeable, & the self same througout all ages, (And which is to come) he sheweth y he doth not speake of the incomprehensible essence of God, of whiche

An exposition vpon the

the sophisters do foolishly and childishly bable many thinges, otherwise he should say, And he which shall be. But whē he affirmeth that he will come, he signifieth vnto vs, that hereafter he will make manifest his glorie euen vnto men, aswell for the comfort and consolation of his Church, as for the destruction and overthrow of the wicked. For the lord is said to come, either to defend the faithfull, or els to reuenge him self vpon the wicked. Almighty we ought not here to dieme of any idle power which doth nothing, but to vnderstand it of such a might as governeth all thinges with his onely will, disposeth all thinges by prouidence, and by force and strength bringeth all thinges to pas. The meaning is, that Christ (which is alpha and omega, the beginning & the end, eternall & vchangeable) is the author of this prophecy, that the faithfull may receiue it with reuerence, the wicked and vngodlye can not despise the same without there deserued punishment.

Uers. 9. I. John which am also your brother, and companion in tribulation & in the kingdome & patience which is in Iesus Christ.

Now he entereth into the narration of the first vision, describing the time, and place & maner of the same. But it is offensive to some, that he so often mentioneth his own name, as though it were not needfull for him that declareth so wonderful visions, often to put the faithfull in minde, who he is which writeth them, least that they should suspect those thinges to be but deuises of mans brayne, when as they were testified of him whose calling and faith were sufficiently knowne to the Church. which selfe same thing we knowe, to be done often time of the other Prophetes, but especialy of Daniell which doth more oftener repete his owne name then this S. John. Howbeit the great modestie of y apostle here appeareth, that when as in many degrees he excelled other, yet he maketh himselfe equall with the rest, calling himselfe a brother, and a partaker of the commune grace of the saintes. Farre otherwise is it with the Romane Byschop which euen in euery reising question doth nothing els but rattle out y popes dignity.

dignitie of the sea Apostolike, and the excellency of his owne holynesse. But these three things are to be noted, in whiche Saincte Iohn saith he is a companion, that is in the kingdome, in affliction, and in the patience of Iesus Christ. He chaulgereth therefore vnto him selfe a portion in afflictions, because it is almost vnpossible, that anye should professe Christ sincerely, but that Sathan will seeke to lay manifold troubles vpon them: how much more then if he preache the Gospell: but it is a gloriousse thing to suffer for Christ. S. Iohn doth therefore comfort the godly, that they are not chastised with anye other of Gods scourges, then he him selfe, whome they knew to be most tenderly beloued of God. But this is more, that he addeth, in the kingdome, for if wee be made like vnto Christ in sufferinges, we shall also be made partakers of his glorie: according to that which Paule sayeth, if we suffer together with him wee shall also raygne together with him. And moreover he setteth forth the qualite of Christes kingdome, in this life to be such, y although we seme dayly to be ouerwhelmed with aduersities and troubles, yet the maiesty of this his kingdome getting the victorie, triumpheth ouer all afflictions. And thirdly that he adioyneth, in patience, he teacheth that troubles and afflictions do no otherwise profite vs to the attayning of this kingdome, then if we beare them patiently for christes glory and the spreading abroad of his gospel. In the meane whyle let vs not pas ouer this, that he calleth it the patience of Christ, whiche none can haue but by his benefite, that they may be able with a quiet and pacified, yea a merie and ioyefull minde to beare the crosse layed vpon their shoulders.

I was in an Ile called Patmos. &c. Now he sheweth the place, that is a litle, desert, barrain and vnpleasant island of the sea Egipt, whiche is called Patmos, into whiche hee was banished by the tyrant Domitian, as all histories agree with one consent.

For the woorde of God and forth testimonie of Iesus.

B. ii.

&c.

reuelation of S. Iohn.

&c. Hee sheweth that the preachinge of the woorde of God and the Gospell of Iesus, was the cause of this his banishment, not that he wold willingly seke any solitarie place there to dwell in, as now of later time the Monkes, the Heremites Anachorites & other solitarie persons haue vsed to do, for whō it had bene moze meter, if they had bene able, or if it had bene lawfull for them, to haue giuen there diligent attendance in declaring Gods woorde and preaching Christes Gospell, in the greatest and most famous cities, if they would truly haue imitated S. Iohn.

Act. 10. **I** was rauished in the spirite on the Lordes daye. &c.

NOW he declareth the time whan this vision was shewed vnto him, it is vpo the day of the Lord or sonday, which day was kepte holy in the assembleies of the Christians, and S. Paule calleth it the first day after the Sabbath. At whiche time, I doubt not but that Sainct Iohn, euen in that great deserte, although he were absent in body, yet was present in spirite, with the Churches: and with his godly prayers and meditations, did commend them to the custodie and defence of Christ. That he sayeth he was in the spirite, I vnderstand that he was rauished from himselfe, and that his bodely senses in the meane time rested, that his minde might be moze free in beholding those thinges which the Lord shewed vnto him. Here wee are taught that the basenesse or deformitie of any place, can not let but that the godly minde, may be drawne vp into the secretes of the heauenly glory. Iohn receyueh visions in the Ile of Patmos, Peter in the rouse of a tanners house, and afterwarde also in prison: and Paule in a toorne shippe, for to such thinges, neither doth the excellencie of the place any thing abaill, neither the vnworthinesse thereof any thing hinder.

And I hearde behinde mee a great voyce as it were of a trumpet saying. &c. That sodainely he hearde a great voice, euen as it were of a loude sounding trumpet, the lord would
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hane him first stricken downe and amased with the straungenesse and greatnesse of the thing it selfe, that he might be the more attentiuely prepared, to receyue those thinges which by and by after, were reuealed vnto him. To the same end also I referre this, that he heard the voyce behinde his backe. For those thinges are more todayne & more vtwarres, which come vpon vs behinde our backs, then those which come before our faces.

Verf. 11. **I** am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last.

Least that S. Iohn should stand in doubt whether this vision were deliuered vnto him by diuine inspiration or no, Christ testifieth with plains and cleare voice, that he is eternall God, the first and the last, according to which sence, the lord in the 41. and 44. Chap. of Esay calleth him selfe the first and the last.

That which thou seest, write in a booke, and send it vnto the seuen Churches which are in Asia, &c. That he might not thinke that he was made partaker of this diuine reuelation onely for his owne sake, (as saint Paul which was taken by cuen into the thirde heauen and heard thinges which it was not lawfull to vtter) but that he mighte make it comen to y^e whole Church, he is commaunded to gather together in a booke those thinges which he saw, & to send it to the seuen Churches of Asia, both that they mighte be keepers of this propheticall booke, and also that they might witnesse to the whole worlde, that it was written by the ministrie of that same Apostle, of whose faith and playn dealing they had sufficient prooffe.

Verf. 12. And I tourned backe to see the voyce that spake with me, and when I was tourned I saw seuen golden candlestickes.

When as he saw nothing before him, and yet was commaunded to write those thinges which he saw, he turned backe that he might see him which vttered this voice, which seemed also to talke with him euen as familiarly as with one whome he knew. And when he was turned, he saw seuen golden candlestickes, which bycause Christ himselfe afterwarde expoun-

13. 14.

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reuelation of S. Iohn.

&c. Bee sheweth that the preachinge of the woorde of God and the Gospell of Iesus, was the cause of this his banishment, not that he wold willingly seke any solitarie place their to dwell in, as now of later time the Monkes, the Heremites Anachorits & other solitarie persons haue vsed to do, for whō it had bene moze meete, if they had bene able, or if it had bene lawfull for them, to haue giuen there diligene attendance in declaring Gods woorde and preaching Christs Gospell, in the greatest and most famous cities, if they would truly haue imitated S. Iohn.

Uers. 10. **I** was rauished in the spirite on the Lordes daye. &c.

NOW he declareth the time whan this vision was shewed vnto him, & is vpo f day of the Lord or sonday, which day was kepte holy in the assembleies of the Christians, and S. Paule calleth it the first day after the Sabbath. At whiche time, I doubt not but that Sainct Iohn, euen in that great deserte, although he were absent in body, yet was present in spirite, with the Churches: and with his godly prayers and meditations, did commend them to the custodie and defence of Christ. That he sayeth he was in the spirite, I vnderstand that he was rauished from himselfe, and that his bodely senses in the meane time rested, that his minde might be moze free in beholding those thinges which the Lord shewed vnto him. Here wee are taught that the basenesse or deformitie of anye place, can not let but that the godly minde, may be dratone vp into the secretes of the heauenly glory. Iohn receybeth visions in the Ile of Patmos, Peter in the rouse of a tanners house, and afterwarde also in prison: and Paule in a toyne shippe, for to such thinges, neither doth the excellencie of the place any thing abasill, neether the vnworthinesse thereof any thing hinder.

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Revel. 1. I. I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last.

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That which thou seest, write in a booke, and send it vnto the seuen Churches which are in Asia, &c. That he might not thinke that he was made partaker of this diuine reuelation onely for his owne sake, (as saint Paul which was taken by cuen into the thirde heauen and heard thinges which it was not lawfull to vtter) but that he mighte make it comen to the whole Church, he is commaunded to gather together in a booke those thinges which he saw, & to send it to the seuen Churches of Asia, both that they mighte be keepers of this propheticall booke, and also that they might witnesse to the whole worlde, that it was writtten by the ministrie of that same Apostle, of whose faith and playn dealing they had sufficient prooffe.

Revel. 1. 2. And I tourned backe to see the voyce that spake with me, and when I was tourned I saw seuen golden candellsticks.

When as he saw nothing before him, and yet was commaunded to write those thinges which he saw, he turned backe that he might see him which vttered this voice, which seemed also to talke with him euen as familiarly as with one whome he knew. And when he was turned, he saw seuen golden candellsticks, which bycause Christ himselfe afterwarde expoun-

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derth to be seuen Churches, wee nede not any longer rest in them. The like is shewed to Zacharie in the 4. Chapt. of his propheticke, excepting this, that Zacharie saw but one for the whole Church, & John did see seue for many particular churches, which were as partes and members of the whole. But how the signe doth represent the thing signified, we will afterwards declare.

Uers. 13. And in the midst of the candellsticks one like vnto the sonne of man.

IT is not greatly materiall whether wee vnderstande, that S. John did know the outward forme and shape of our saviour Christ in the Aungell which he had sent, or whether y speaking simply according to y maner of the old Prophetes, he meaneth that he appeared hauing taken vpon him y forme and shape of a man, so that we holde this for certentie, that he represented the person and figure of Christ, which manifested him selfe to be seene. For he is alwayes conuerlant in the midst of his church & doth gouerne it with his spirite, & hath a continuall care ouer the same. In vaine therefore wee seke Christ any other where, then in the church, in vaine also do we seke a Church founded vpon any other then Christ. what say the Romane bpsshops here answer, which boast them selues to be Christs vicars as though he were absent, whome neuertheless John saw in the midst of the candellsticks, because hee is alwaies present with his Church, and chalengeth the whole gouernement thereof to him selfe alone.

Clothed with a garment downe to the feete. &c. Because this kinde of garment was suche as pertayned to the priestes, I do not mislike that some do interprete it to signify in this place, the purenesse & innocencie of the priesthode of Christ: although in my iudgement it is moze simple to say, that it declareth a certaine rare dignitie, and reuerende maiestie of the person that weareth it.

And gyrded about the papps with a goldē gyrdle. The priestes were also girded about with a gyrdle y they might y moze speedely execute there office, for a large garment hanging loose about our, is a let or hinderance to those which should speedely finish

finishe any worke they goe aboute. Christ therefore is gyrded about with a gouldē gyrdel that we should not thinke he standeth in the midst of the candellstickes like a deade Image, or as an idle looker on, but as one that is girded vp, and so most ready prepared to execute those necessary businesse, which doe apperteyne vnto him in the gouernment of the Church. Which readinesse truly is moze preciousse then any gold, and is suche an ornament to his office and function, that not vnwozthely, it might well be signified vnto vs by a golden gyrdle. But in that he hath his brest gyrded about and not his loynes, some thinke it to be done for this cause, that he hath no neede, as mortall wyeches haue, to repressse with gyrding about, prauie and wicked affections from which he was free, but his brest onely replenished with wisdom, and loue towarde his seruants is gyrded about with a golden gyrdell, to signifie his great diligence.

Mat. 14. His head and his heare were white as wolfe, and as snow.

By this shining brightnesse of his head and his heare, it is necessary that we vnderstand his wonderfull glozy and dignitie, whiche farre surmounteth the condition of men, which neuertheles shineth in the manhoode of Christ. A shew whereof he gaue, when he was transfigured in the mount, when his garments shined whiter then any snow.

And his eyes were as a flame of fire. &c. Some do referre this to wrathfulnesse & anger, wherewith he is incensed & stirred vp against his enemies. But I thinke rather they signify the exceeding quickenes and sharpenes of his sight, wherewith euen as fire he perceith through all thinges, so y nothing can be hid from his presence, no not the secretes and hidde corners of y heart. In vaine therfore do hypocrites hope that they can keepe them selues close from his sight, whose fiery eyes do pearce through euē vnto all the depest secrets. And such an head yt becometh y church dispersed ouer the face of the whole worlde to haue, which being furnished w fiery eyes, may loke round about into all parts of the same, and fynd out the subtile and pryue practices & deceiptes of Satan, and when they are founde out can auoyde them.

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Verf. 15. ¶ And his feete were like vnto fine brasse as though they burned in a forname.

THis similitude doth expresse the constancie and vnweryed studie and diligence of Chyist in cherishing and helping his Church, when with these feete he walketh continually in the midst of the candellstickes. There is also noted vnto vs, the beautie and perfection of his wayes, because he hath feete of metall tried and polished with fire.

And his voice was as the sounde of manye waters. First he compared his voice to a trompet, now to the noise of many waters, and afterwarde also he will compare it to thonder, and not without just cause, which sounded through the whole world in spreading abroad of the Gospell. Which that we may passe ouer other thinges, is of such vertue and force, that the dead shall heare it out of there graues. Whereby the shamful vn sensible blockishnesse of those men is the more to be abhorred, whose eares being dayly stricken with the sound thereof, do either scarcely at the length heare but a little, or els are altogether deafe.

Verf. 16. ¶ And he had in his right hand seuen starres.

The starres he himselfe doth interpret to be Angells, & is pastors of the Churches, which otherwise are subiect to innumerable perils and daungers, but that the Lord holdeth them in his right hand, least that they should falle, and with great care he defendeth those, to whom he hath committed the charge ouer his Church. Here the true pastors are admonished, that they ought not to leaue off from doing there duety, for any laboures, crosses, or afflictions, for howsoever Sathan and his ministers shall raise vp false accusations against them, and threaten imprisonment, tormentes and death also it selfe, yet they ought manfully to contemne all these, because he himselfe hath a care ouer there health and safegarde, out of whose hand, no force or power is able to drawe them.

And out of his mouth went a sharpe two edged sword. It is verie vsuall in the scriptures to compare the word of

God

God vnto a two edged sword which s. Paule calleth the sword of the spirite. With this sword the faithfull are armed against all the violence, craftes and subtilties of the deuill, the mighty force wherof the Apostell doth notably describe in the 4. Chapter to y^e Hebrewes. With the same Christ fygtheth against his enemies. And we may not take this sword any where els, then proceeding out of his mouth, for what soeuer came not forth of the holy mouth of Christ, is not in any wise to be taken for y^e sword of God.

And his face shone euen as the sunne in his strength. &c. The same that the Sunne is to y^e whole world, euen the same is Christ to his church, which being but only one, and placed in heauen, yet neuerthelesse, with his shining brightnes he lighteneth y^e whole church being a stranger vpon earth, for truly he is y^e sunne of righteousness, which so soone as he shineth in the consciences of the godly, straighte waye driueth awaye all the darkenes of the deuill, and filleth the mind with most ioyfull light, whose brightnes to couer with the cloudes of darkenesse the deuill laboreth all in vaine, whiche is so farre of, that they should be to able obscure & darken his cleare countenance, that they being dispersed and driuen away, his glory doth appeare oute of them farre more cleare and bright.

Act. 17 And when I saw him I fell at his feet euen as dead.

Mannes infirmity can not beare the beholdinge of Goddes glory, but straight way it falleth downe. So maruelle it is therefore though S. Iohn beholding Christ in such brightnes, fell downe as it were dead befoze his feet. For which cause his word is more to be reuerenced, where with he allureth vs so gently and familiarly to come vnto him, which if he should shew forth but euen the least shadow of his heauenly glory, we should not be able to abide it, but should fall downe vpon the earth as deade.

Then he layde his right hand vpon me saying. &c. The Lord lifteth vp his seruauent that lay prostrate vpon the earth wth his touching & with his voice. For after that God hath habited

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vs to his obedience he comforteth vs againe by his mercy. We are here taught that we shall lye deade at the beholdinge of the beuenlye gloze, except Chyist reach forth his hand vnto vs, and with his comfortable voice take from vs our feare.

Feare not I am the first and the last, &c. He sheweth that they neede not to feare, to whom Chyist which is the first & the last both vouchsafe to be mercifull.

I liue and was deade. &c. And whiche liueth for this ende þe may for euer saue those that come vnto god by him. From whom it is so farre of that death should take away his lyfe, that contrariwise being conqueror of death he hath attayned eternall life. This particle *Ame* is added for the greater confirmation.

I haue the keyes of hell and of death. &c. He saith that he hath obtayned the highe gouernment and empire ouer eternal death, that he might declare vnto vs, that they neede not to be afraid of death or hell: whom Chyist hath taken into his custody and keeping: on the contrary parte, that they shalbe adiudged to eternal punishment which becom enemies to him, which hath the keyes of hell and death.

*Verf. 19. Write therefore the thinges which thou hast seene
and the thinges whiche are, and the thinges which
shall be fulfilled hereafter.*

He commaundeth that he should diligently commit to writinge the visions shewed vnto him: of whiche he declareth some of them to be descriptions of thinges euen then present, as those which did peculiarly pertaine to those seuen Churches: and some of them to expresse the state and conditiõ of the church euen vnto the woordes ende.

*Verf. 20. And the mistery of the seuen starres which thou sawest
in my right hand and the seuen golden candelsticks. The seuen
starres are the angels of the Churches, and the seuen
candelsticks which thou sawest are seuen
Churches. &c.*

Chyist is the best interpreter of all mysteries, he expoundeth therefore the mistery of the seuen starres and of the seuen candel

candelstickes teachinge that by the starres is signified the Ministers of the Churches, which ought to shine before the Churches in y^e light of heavenly doctrine, & as starres to take all their light frō the sunne which is Christ. By the golde candelstickes is ment the churches which God hath chosen, to supplye the light of his gospell in the midst of y^e darkenes of this world, as in an other place the Church is called the pillar of truerh. The candelsticks are of golde, that we may knowe in what price they are with God. Moreover here, wee learne that without the Churches whiche are the candelstickes to beare the light, we shall finde nothing in this world but horrible darkenesse. Let vs beseeche Christ therefore, that he will for ever keepe this light among vs, and that he will draw vs out of the darkenesse of this world and bring vs to the lighte of his heavenly glorie, to whom be all praise and honour for ever and ever. Amen.

¶ The second Chapter.

Verf. 1.

¶ Unto the Angell of the Churches
of Ephesus write. &c.



That the Churches might vnderstand how profitable this prophetic should be to the ages folowing, & therefore they might receiue it more reuerently, and keepe it more religiously, and spreade it abroad more diligently: the lord wold instruct them by some experience in them selues. The Church of Ephesus was as it were the mother citie of all Asia. Not that it had any authoritie ouer the rest (for there was no difference perceined to be among the golde Candelstickes) but y^e it was gathered together in the moste famous citie & therefore oughte cheefly to giue forthe his lighte by example of doctrine and manners.

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And he writeth to the Angels of the Churches that is to the Ministers and Pastours, not that those admonitions were necessarie to them onely but because that, from them whether it be good or euill that proceeded, it flowed into the whole bodie of the Church whereof they had the gouernmēt, like as also in the Church whatsoener things were well or euill, they ought to be imputed either to there diligence or negligence.

¶ These thinges sayeth he that holdeth the seuen starres in his right hand, and walketh in the middelt of the seuen golden Candelstickes.

¶ That the pastours of the Church might know how greatly they ought to esteeme these admonitions, Christ foretelleth y they all proceeded fro him, which a litle before was perfectly described in the vision. As touching the pastor of Ephesus, he writeth, that it is the commaundement of him that holdeth the seuen starres. &c. That is, which by his ayed and succour doth defend as well the Churches them selues, as there pastours, and by his prouident care, doth kepe them in safetie, that he may acknowledge it to be his benefit, that being free from so many euils, and adorned and decked with so manye vertues, he should be praised of Christ.

¶ Ier. 1. ¶ I know thy woorkes, and thy labour, and patience.

¶ Because nothing is more easy to hipocrites then to boast of faith which outwardly doth not appeare by any woorkes, or els doth glory in woorkes that are onely coloured and deceytable, he forwarneth all mē, that whatsoener sayth they boast themselves, in outward profession to haue, that he throughly seeth and knoweth what there woorkes are. (And thy labour) It seemeth that the diligent care of this pastor in gouerning the Church was verie great, that the Lord doth counte it woorthie of such praise. And truly this diligēce is most necessarie for the minister which hath the care of the Lordes stocke committed vnto him, to which also he ought to ioyne pacience, because it can not be, that any can be able to execute diligently the office committed vnto him, but that Sathan will deuise, and stee by diuers persecutions and troubles against him, which that he may

may beare with a strong and stable minde, he hath neede to be armed with patience.

And thou canst not forbear them which are euil, and hast examined them which say they are Apostels and are not, & hast found them liars. &c. He doth also commend the zeale of this pastore, in druing wicked men out of the church, and such as would not be brought to a better minde; and not onely those whiche shewed them selues openly to be such, but euen those also, which shewed them selues vnder the honorable name of Apostels, when as in the meane time they were greuous plagues to the churches, of whiche sort are sayde to be, Nicholas, Ebion, Cherinthus, Marcion, Manicheus, which strined and labored with there newe opinions, to defyle the puritie of the gospel, whose subtilties and deceiptes by his diligence, and wisdom being found out, he perceined, & when they were perceined he strongly resisted them.

Wers. 3. And thou hast suffered and hast patience and for my names sake hast labored and hast not fagnted.

Although he could not beare there wickednes, yet he was constrained to suffer the troubles & persecutiōs which they stirred vp against him. which because he bare patiently, he declared that he did not boast of patience, but that he had patience in dede. Lastly that he would willingly susteyne so great labour for Christs names sake, and y^e he neuer fainted as ouer come with any griefes, it is sufficiente prooofe, that he was the seruante of Christ, and not of his owne belly, a pastor of the church, and not an hepering.

Wers. 4. Neuerthelesse I haue somewhat against thee because thou hast left thy first charity.

There is nothing thoroughly perfect in this corrupt nature of man. For he which a litle before seemed to want nothing that shoulde make to the praise and commendation of a good pastor, is now accused, that he hath left his former loue. For when as we ought to profit and goe forward daily in the study of godlines, and charity towards our neighbours, he went not forward, but into y^e whiche was worse. For he had eate of much

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much of his former burninge zeale, whiche neuerthelesse, he ought dayly more and more to haue increased. But it may be demaunded how his zeale should fyrst be commended, and his vnweryed exercise of labouringe. It may be answered, that his zeale was euē then also worthy commendation, although it were much more seruient before, and it may come to passe, & one may be indued with a heroical spirit against the vngodly, and yet not loue his brethren as he ought to do, for these two I ioyne together, pietie toward God and loue towardes our brethren, because nether of them is without the other.

Uers. 5. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen and repent and do the first workes, or els I will come against thee shortly and will remoue thy candelstick out of his place except thou Amend.

THE disease beinge found out and shewed, although neuer so secret, he counsellerh and perswadeth to lay to it & medicine of repentance, which that it may be healthfull, he commaundeth him two thinges. fyrst to way and consider from how excellēt godlines he is cast down, out of what blessed state and condition he is fallen, and whether at length (excepte he take hede in time) of necessity he muste fall, whiche suffereth loue by litle and litle to die in him selfe. The other is that he flatter not him selfe, like as hipocrites do in this daungerous estate, nether secke coloures or clokes to hide and excuse his fault, but without delay reouer his former loue, and doe his former workes, whiche thinges if he neglect, he shall shortlye proue, how daungerous a thinge it is, to despise the frendely admonitions of Chyist, when as his candelstick beinge removed out of his place, he maye looke for nothinge but horrible darkenes yea more then the darkenes of Egypt, to come vpon him. This place doth admonishe vs how sharply God wil punishe the neglecte of profiting and goinge forward in godlines. But it seemeth contrary to all reason, that for one mans offence, & whole church shold be punished wth so extreme & deadly a punishment, but we ought to remember that this euill flowing out of the pastour him selfe, did runne ouer the whole

whole Church. For such as the ministers of the Church are such also we see the people for the most part to be.

Verf. 6. But this thou hast that thou hast the woorkes of the Nicholaites which I also haue. &c.

HE meaneth him to haue deserued, that euen oute of hande he should execute sharpe punishment vpon him, but that he mighte not thinke his former vertues to bee defrauded of there iust rewarde, he sheweth that there is a time of repentance graunted, specially for this cause, that he fully hated the doctrine and woorkes of the Nicholaites which the Lord also pronounceth to be worthy of his hatred. whith woorkes if wee may beleue auncient writings, were wicked and soule pollutions & defilinges of Matrimonie, and prostitutions of there wiues, which they would haue in common among them and afterwarde Christ calleth it fornication, and eatinge of thinges offered to Idols. But the papistes shall here vnfitly moue any question as concerninge the deserttes of woorkes. When as also the Lorde doth seme often to giue some reward to the woorkes of the wicked, which haue but an outward shew of goodnes as the fayned repentance of Achabe, whiche hee doth for this cause that he may shew how greatly those which are good woorkes in dede do please him, much more the vertues of the godly ought to be accepted of him which is y^e author of all goodnesse, not that they deserue any suche thing, seing they be vnperfecte, but because through his fatherly fauour, they are taken in good part.

Verf. 7. He that hath eares to heare, let him heare what the spirite sayeth to the Churches. &c.

Lest any should thinke these thinges to be spoken only to the pastours of the Churches, the holy ghost speaketh generally to all, as manye as haue there eares opened to heare what the spirite sayeth, not onely to the Aungells, but also to the Churches them selues. whereby we doe well vnderstand, that these admonitions are not priuate to some peticuler persons, but common to all. For those that shall sinne after the the same maner, shalbe rewarded with the like punishment, like

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like as also the same rewardes are appointed to those that co-
uet to folow the same vertues which are here commended.

To him that ouercommeth I will giue to eate of the tree
of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God. &c.
He teacheth that the godly haue a great strife, with this world
& with the deuill, but all labours are to be set light by, in con-
sideration of the inestimable greatnesse of the reward. To the
conquerers therefore in this battaill, the Lorde whiche is our
gouernour in the same, will graunt them to eate of the fruite
of the tree of eternall life, which is in the midst of the hea-
uenuely paradise, from the vse whereof we know that oure first
parentes for there sinne were iustly excluded. Here wee are
taught that it is Christ, that openeth the paradise vnto vs
whiche was shute, whiche freely giueth vnto vs eternall life,
whereof the tree of life was a sacrament, and yet, not vnto
such as are slothfull and idle, but to those that fight valiantly
against the enemies, and in the end by his vertue and power
ouercome the. we are here also put in mind, what a prouoca-
tiō to stirre vs vp to contend, the greatnes of the reward set
forth to those that ouercome, ought to be, when as we dayly
see the greatest labours to be bozne for the obteyning of the
smallest benefites of this corruptible life.

Clert. 6. And vnto the Tuncell of the Church of the Smyrnatans
write, these thinges saeth he which is the first and the
last which was dead and is alieue. &c.

Smyrna was the chiefe citie of Ionia, therefore he was comā-
ded to sende the seconde epistle to the Byshop of the same,
this byshop as it semeth was a right faithfull Christian, whē
as the Lorde counted nothinge in him worthe reprobation,
not that hee was without sinne, but that as muche as mans
weaknesse coulede, he was free from heynouse offences, and
a faithfull administratour of the office and charge committed
vnto him. whiche was donne so muche the more, because the
Lord had exercised him with continuall temptations. For we
se that idlenes bredeth carelesnes and securite. He had neede
therefore of great consolation, because he was oppressed with
many

many aduersities. Christ therefore vseth such a kind of preface, which should be most fit to confirme and strengthen him, that he is the first and the last, that is eternall God, therefore thoughte hee should suffer the most grievous affliction of all, which is death it selfe, yet Christ which hath overcome death, and hell, liueth for euer, not for him selfe but for vs.

Clers. 9. I know thy workes and tribulation and pouertie, but thou arte riche. &c.

That his workes are allowed of Christ, it oughte to bee as muche as all rewardes, and a most notable comfort, for God can neuer forsake, those whose workes hee testifieth doe please him. But he proceedeth forward, and first he sayth that he doth know his affliction and pouertie. The Deuill can lay nothing vpon the godlye, rashly or without the determinat counsell of God the lord knoweth both. The weight of afflictions and the strength of his seruantes, wherefore hee will not suffer them to be tempted aboue that they are able to beare, but he will shew a way out, euen of the midst of the maze of temptations. He is not ignorant how beaue a burthen pouertie is, but yet he sayeth that this pastour is rich because he had an incorruptible treasure layed vp in heauen. The riches of this worlde are thornes, by whiche the immortall seede is choked, therefore wee oughte not to bee grieved for the want of them. And it is verie like that by these twoo thinges, that is by affliction and pouertie, he was holden in his office, least he should waxe wanton, or be taken in the deceitfulness of the worlde.

And I know the blasphemie of those that calle them selues Jewes and are not but are the synagoge of Sathan. &c. Thirdly he addeth the sleaunders wherewith the wicked did assaile him, which falselye called them selues Jewes, that is the Church of God when as there wickednes did betray them, not to be the holy seede of Abraham, but a prophane synagog of Sathan, & as it is said in the history of Susanna, a seede of Chanaan and not of Iuda. Truly a noble mind & a cleere conscience

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of all euils beareth this railing slaunders most greivous-
lye, but this ought to suffice the godly that Christ pronounceth
them blessed, which for his cause haue all poisoned tounge ar-
med against the. And here he admonisheth that this blasphemie
is not spronge vp from good men, but it was raised by wicked
hypocrites, whose abominations were detested and abhorred of
all the godly. This place doeth teache, that it is profitable to the
godly pastors of the church, to be tried by afflictions, by pover-
tye, and sometime also by infamy and sleaunderinge, raised by
by the subtiltye of Sathan and his ministers, by whiche there
faith, constancy, patience, and innocencye, is better proued and
tried, then if they should liue in happy estate all there life long
not oppressed with any aduersities.

Uers. 10. Feare none of those thinges that thou shalt suffer, be
holde it shall come to pas that the deuill shall cast
some of you into prison that
ye may be tried.

After that he hath testified that he knoweth his labours, least
that he might thinke any thing to come vpon him by chaunce
or at the will and pleasure of the aduersaries, that he might
perceiue he was strengthened by the aied of god, that hether to
he did not faint in the troublesome waues of afflictions: he doth
instruct & arme him against the stormes folowing against the
most bitter hatred of Sathan, which he shoulde shortly tast of by
experience. For the madde rage of the deuill shoulde procede so
far, that he woulde cast certaine of his flocke into prison, for the
testimony of the gospel, but he sheweth that the diuine prou-
idence of god would so moderate this his furious rage, that this
tribulation should not byinge destruction to the children of god
which Sathan sought to bring to pas, but a triall which is pro-
fitable for them. Here we see by whose leadinge the enemies of
the Church rage in cruelty against the faithfull, that is by the
inspiration of the Deuill, whiche hath the gouernance of all
there workes, and also worketh in them. We are put in mind
with what kind of weapons and armour we ought to be fur-
nished

nished against this spirituall aduersarie, that is with spirituall armour.

And ye shall haue tribulation ten dayes. &c. The number of tenne in the scriptures, according to the phrase of the Hebrew tongue, is the number of fulnesse or perfection. As in Genes. 31. Num. 14. Job. 29 He declareth therefore vnto them, that so long as they remaine in this worlde, they must not hope to haue an end of there afflictions. Neuerthelesse he mitigateth the griefe of the continuance thereof, in that he noteth that time, by dayes and not by yeares, as if he should saie, for a few dayes, whiles ye liue in this worlde ye shall be subiect to troubles and afflictions, which being finished ye shall inioye eternall blessednes in heauen.

Be faithfull vnto death and I will giue the a crowne of life. &c. we see now what shield he counselleth vs to hold out againste all these weapons, that is faith, which he commaundeth vs to kepe constant, & stable euen vnto death that it may be adozned with the crown of immortality. He teacheth that afflictions are not to be suffered heauily or sorrowfully, throughout the short course of this life, when as they are to be rewarded with perpetuall felicity, and that death is manfully to be suffered for Christ, which eternall life shall recompence, reproche and ignominye is not to be feared, which doth bring vs to the crowne of glory.

1. Cor. 11. Let him that hath an care heare what the spirite saith to the Churches he that ouercometh shall not be hurt of the second death. &c.

Aaine the holy ghost doth witnesse that this is a voice which all the godly should diligently way and consider: He that ouercometh shall not be hurt of the second death, that is hee shall be deliuered from euerlastinge damnation. The first death is of the bodie onely, the second both of bodie and soule. A wonderfull comfort that they which be tormented with sundrie kindes of afflictions in this worlde, after death hath finished this wretched life, shall liue for euer in most blessed estate, and voyed of all feare of death. For

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this mortal life is ene for this cause miserable, y^e it is in feare of death alwaies hanging ouer it, nor onely of the body but much moze of the soule, except in those in which by y^e deeth of Christ, the sting of deathe beinge broken, they are called to the hope of blessed, and immortall life.

Uers. 12. And to the Tugell of the Church which is at Pergamus Write, this sayeth he which hath the sharpe sword with two edges.

PERGAMUS was the cheefe citie of Shyrgia, to whose byshop the third epistle is sent, with this preface, y^e it was sent from him, which hath the twoo edged sword, whose doctrine can suffer no mingling of prophane opinions, but cutteth of all peruerse doctrines from the Church, as pernicious plagues to the same.

Uers. 13. **I** know thy workes &c.

First Christ doth know ledge, and confesse that he doth allowe, whatsoeuer thinges are well donne of him, and yet this doth not hinder, that hee should lesse frely shewe, whatsoeuer he noteth in him worthie reprehension.

And where thou dwellest, euen where Sathans throne is and thou kepest my name. &c. How muche moze grieuous the perils werewhich copassed him in on euery side, so much moze commendable was his faith and the inuincible constancie of his inside. He dwelled wheare the throne of Sathan was, that is, where all godlynesse was troden down, and vngodlines bare all the swaye. where as Sathan sitting as it were in the stately seat of his kingdome ruled all thinges according to his owne pleasure. In that place, as it was necessarie that all wickednes shold aboide, so likewise the greatest crueltie and tyranny. It was an argument of a contagious and herocall spirite, and a plaine prooffe of diuine constancie, in so great daungers, to holde a free and sound confession of the faith.

And hast not denied my faith euen in those dayes when Antipas my faithful martyr was slaine amog you where Sathan dwelleth. &c. He testifieth that the constancie of this
confes-

confession of his faith, was not broken by any deniall, no not euen then when persecution did mosse of all rage against the church, that is, euen at that time when as the faithfull martyrs of Christ Antypas was cruelly murdered, with those whiche being led and gouerned by Sathan lyke rauening wolues doe cruelly rage against the flocke of Christ. This place doeth teach that whersoeuer cruelty and tyranny doth rage against the children of God, there is neither the seat of Christ nor of the Apostles, but of Sathan, as it is in the Church of Rome. Moreover that den'all of faith, although it be in extreme daungers, is not permitted to christians, as the false psychodemics mainteyne. And lastly what honorable mention Christ maketh of his martyre whiche was slaine, that we should not doubt how precious the death of them is to the Lord, to whome it is graunted, by there death to glorify God.

Uers. 15.

But I haue a few thinges
against thee.

Christ doth not kepe close that whiche was wanting in him that is to say the zeale which he had commended in the pastor of Ephesus, that he could not suffer the wicked, and speciallye the Nicolaites whose doctrine also the lord testifieth that he hateth, this pastor of Pergamus didde not so manfully and stoutlye resist such kind of persons.

Because thou hast there, them that maintaine the doctrine of Balaã, which taught Balac to put a stumbling blocke before the children of Israell, that they shoulde eate of thinges sacrificed to Idols and comit fornication. &c. That he might make those menne more to be abhozred he compareth there doctrine, with the doctrine of the olde false Prophete Balaam whiche for rewardes sake, taught and instructed Balac, with the what engines the helth and safegard of the Israelites might be ouerthrowen, that is, that by the whorshe women of the Madianites they mighte be enticed to fornication and idolatrye, whiche came so to pas, as we reade in Numery 14 and 25. and the Nicolaites did teach y same thinges, that is to haue wines

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in common and without any difference to cate those thinges that were offered to Idoles, whereby it is gathered, that as they were giuen to foule pleasures of the flesh, so also con-
tently minded, which for filthy lukers sake taught those thinges were not mete. The pastors are here admonished that they ought not to wincke at the aucthors and teachers of errors, and false doctrine no not euen then, when as persecution is most cruell and bitter, for it is great daunger, tha the poison should spred further abroad, and deuoure the whole and sincere hope of Christ.

Uers. 16. But he conuerted, or els I will come vnto the shortly
and will fyght against them with the sword
of my mouth. &c.

VVE must nedes confesse that he had heynously sinned, that he should be called to repentance, and that vnder this condition, that excepte he should speedely returne in to the right way, the Lord himselfe will fight against them, & slea them with the sword of his mouth. For this is the force and strength of his worde, that those which it doth not bringe to a better minde it maketh subiect to eternall curse. But here the question may be asked, what this did pertaine to the pastor of Pergamus which was of a right iudgment in the faith, if the Lord iustly punish the Nicholaites being heretikes. I aunswere that the Lord comprehendeth him in the number of the same persons, so long as he shall not leaue of to communicate with them in there sinnes, by fauouring, and wickinge at the same. For he will require there bloud at his handes, if he shalbe negligent in doing his office, either in correcting, or dymning them out of the Church.

Uers. 17. He that hath an eare to heare let him heare
what the spiritte sayeth to the
Churches. &c.

HE doth alwayes repeat this, that wee may know, that it is the purpose of the holy ghost to set forth the doctrine not for one man or one Church onely but generallye for all men.

To

To him that ouercommeth I will giue to eate manna that is hid and will giue him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth sauing he that recey- ueth it, &c. Like as he threatneth punishment to the dispisers of his worde, so also he promiseth reward to the faithfull that shall ouercome all temptations: that beinge made partakers of the heauenly table, they shall be satisfied with angells bread. Not with that manna which there fathers did eate fortie yeares in the wilderness and yet are dead, but with that liuinge bread which came downe from heauen, and giueth eternall life to as many as shall eate it. Of which the former manna was but a figure & shadow. And he seemeth to allude to that manna which was hid in the arke, which being kept by the commaundment of God, remayned many hundred yeares incorrupted, when as that notwithstanding which the Israelites did eate, being kept but vnto the nexte daye would putrifye and stincke. A white stone, in election of officers did assigne him, which should be made a magistrate. By this white stone therefore the Lorde doth signifie, what great honour he will bestowe vpon him, which shall ouercome the vaine enticementes of this worlde. By the name written in it, which none doth vnderstand, but he which receaueth the stone, I vnderstand that by the earnest of the spirite shall be sealed in his hart, the full assurance of eternall life, of which euerie one is priuie to him selfe alone. He doth promise therefore, not onely of the hidden manna plentie & fulnesse, but also euertlasting tranquillie of mind, through the feling of Gods mercy. The new name signifieth the grace of regeneration, that a new name may agree to a new man. woe be to our cowardlye sluggish- nes, if pleasing our selues in the vaine pleasures of this worlde we either dispise or litle esteeme so ample rewardes, and like to the Israelites, desire flesh to be giuen vs in steede of manna, and being called to the dignitie of the children of God, we had rather serue in Egypte, in most miserable bondage.

Act. 18. And vnto the Tugell of the Church of the Thyatirians, write this saith the sonne of God, which hath his eyes like vnto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fyne brasse. &c.

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HE is commaunded to write the fourth epistle to y^e pastor of the Church which is at Thyatira a citie of Lydia. He maketh this preface that the sonne of God is the author of this Epistle, from whose fiery eyes no spotte or blemish of the Church can be hid, whose feet being like fine brasse, do signify the perfection of his waies, neither doe they admit any forged myrtures.

Act. 19. **I** know thy woozkes and thy charitie, and seruice, and fapth, and thy patience. &c.

There are manye vertues commended in him, but yet not without some spotte of negligence. Very properly and fitly he ioyneth seruice to charitie, and patience to faith. For if we loue our brethren with vnfayned loue, we shal not be grieved to do the dueties of charitie towarde them. And if wee haue a liuely faith in God, we will for his glories sake, suffer patiently all the calamities which he shall lay vpon vs.

And thy workes. &c. which sprong and flowed out of these vertues, faith in God and loue towarde our neighbours. It was not a bare and empirie name of faith & charitie, but he was endued with true faith which worketh by charitie.

And the last are moe then the first. &c. This doth almost exceede the other praises, and commendations, that he had not left his former loue, as the pastour of Ephesus had, but the studie of godlinesse did increase in him dayly more and more. which thing although it be straitly requyred of all men, yet we finde but fewe which do not the contrarie, that is that either they profit not in godlines at all, or els are changed into worse. we must therefore haue great care to imitate and follow this Church and the pastour of the same, that we may do our indeauour, that the proceedings may not onely be agreeable to the beginniges, but also excell the same.

Act. 20. **N**otwithstanding I haue a few things against the, that thou sufferest that woman Jezabell which calleth her selfe a prophete to teach and to deceyue my seruantes, to make them committe fornication and to eate meate offered to Idols. &c.

This pastour is repproued, for his neglect of ecclesiasticall discipline.

spline, that hee did not putte to silence, those praeling women which taught wicked thinges. Whereby we gather, that it is the office of the minister, to repressse the insolent pride of those which arrogantly take vpon them the office of teachinge not being called thereto by the Church, much more it pertyneth to them, to repressse false Prophetes, which set forth there peruerse opinions. Like as this minister is here firste reprehended, that he suffered a woman, whether she were but one, or whether they were moe, to teach, which is not agreeable to the comelines of ecclesiasticall discipline: & after, that he did beare wth hir teaching so wicked thinges. And he calleth hir Jezabell because that according to the example of the wicked wife of Achab, she deceyued the people & seduced them into errours. which although she pretended to haue a spirite of prophecy in here impieties, yet she is knowne by this, that she fayned new reuelations, to establish the damned doctrine of the Nicholaites. For she taught with these Nicholaites, these thinges; to committe fornication & to eate meate offered to Idols. This was no smale negligence of the pastour, that hee suffered the seruantes of God, the shepe of Christ, by his carelesnes to fall headlonge into so deape a dongeon of errours. we may note here the craftines of sathan, which that he may make his false stuffe sailable amonge men, inuented newe reuelations contrarie to the woorde of God. So Simon sheweth of on Selen, Apelles of Philemena, Montanus of Pylca & Martilla, the Papistes haue there Brigites, and in oure age also they suborne certeine prophesing wenches, as now of late in Kent a certeyne nunne named Elizabeth Barton, all of them that they may defile the pure doctrine of the Gospell, set forth in the holy wyritings of the Apostles with newe and vnpure opinions, vnder the shew of heauenly reuelations. Such per-
silient soyes as these are diligently to be eschewed.

Uers. 21. And I gaue hir space to repent of hir fornication
and she repented not. &c.

It is meruail that the most mightie God would not strait-
way strike downe with thunder these greate blasphemies

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and the Authozes of the same, so sone as they were broughte forth, but his gentlenesse is wonderfull, by which he graunteth a time of repentaunce euen to such persons, which when they shall dispiſe, as it is sayd this arrogante woman did. He recōpenseth his slackenes, with increasing the punnishment.

Clers. 22. Beholde I will cast hir into a bed, and them that committe fornication with hir into great affliction except they repent them of there workes. &c.

He threateneth not her onely, but those also which willingly applie there corrupt ears to heare her adulterate doctrine, that excepte they repente in time they shalbe taughte by moste sharp punnishments, that it is no light matter or such as shall escape unpunished, to defile the heauenly doctrine with these deuillish deuises. By the bed he himself expōdeth to be mente great affliction, and the Metaphor doth fitly agree, for as adulterers haue beddes seruing for there filthy pleasures, which they esteeme as the greatest delights, so the Lord will caste the into a bed of the greatest miseries, out of which they can not rise without extreme and finall destruction.

Clers. 23. And I will kill hir children with death, and all the Churches shall know that I am he which search the reines and harte and I will giue to euery one of you according to his workes. &c.

The disciples of the prophetes are called there sons. This woman therefore which chalinged to hir selfe the name of prophetisse had hir disciples which are here called hir childre. These the Lord doth adiudge to death, and pronounceth that he will punish them most sharply and extreamely. That it may be made manifest to all Churches, that no hipocrisy can deceyue Christ, which perceeth euen vnto the depe and secret thoughtes of the reines & hart. All men peraduenture wil acknowledge this in voice and woordes, but yet manye doe so fauour and flatter them selues in grose dissimulation that they hope that they can auoyd Gods iudgement, & therefore to themselves, they let lose the brydle to all vngodlines. But whē god shall performe, & which hee hath promised, that he will render to euery man according to his workes, then they shall perceiue howe horrible a thing it is to reiect the grace offered vnto the
and

& to continue in there accustomed crooked path of wickednes obstinately vnto the ende. But of the desertes of good workes here can nothing be gathered, for this far differeth, that God will geue to euery man accordinge to his workes, from this that the papistes defend, that God doth respect the merites of workes in iustifying a man.

Uers. 24 And vnto you I say the reste of them of Thyatira as many as haue no this learning neither haue knowen the depenes of Sathan as they terme it I will put vpon you none other burthen.

It appeareth that there were many in this Church whiche did not onely not fauour this wicked and deuillish doctrine but also by all meanes did oppugne & resist the same. Those Christ doth not charg in the same fault with the rest, but doth onely exhorde them, that they suffer not the simplicitie of there faith to be corrupted with anye fained inuentions of new reuelations, howsoeuer the authoers of the same boast nothing else but the depe misteries of God, which neuertheles rather deserue to be called the secrets of Sathan. Except peraduenture they them selues called the secretes of there knowledg e the depthes of sathan, as the words pretend, which cometh all to one cude. Truly Daule had respect to an other thinge, when he sayed that the depe cogitations of Sathan were not vnknewen to him.

Uers. 25. But that which ye haue already, hold fast till I come. &c.

HE warneth them to be content with the doctrine deliuered vnto them from the Apostles, and to admit no new opinions, but that they kepe the same euen vnto his comminge again, and to reuerence it as sacred & holy. whatsoeuer therefore the Romane Antichrist & other Heretikes strine to bring into the Church, which is manifest not to haue bene deliuered to the Churches from the Apostles, we may strongly reiect it, as an other burthen wherwith the Lord will not haue vs to be laden.

Uers. 26. 27. For whosoever ouercommeth and kepeth my workes to the end, to him will I geue power ouer nations, and he shall rule them with a rodde of iron and as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shyers.

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Hē sheweth who they be which in the end shall get the victorie, not those that for a time shall stande stoutly in the fore front, and afterward be subdued, but they which shall fight euē to the ende of the battail. And Christ doth set his woorkes as contrarie to the woorkes of the Nicholaites, as also his doctrine is contrarie to there doctrine. For as of true and sound doctrine good woorkes doe spring and flow, so of necessitie euill woorkes folow vnpure opinions. The reward which hee setteth forth by so diuers figuratiue speeches, is notwithstanding but one, and the same common to all the godly: which is the partaking of him selfe, so when Christ calleth vs to take part of his kingdome, wherof he is the right heire, he giueth all thinges vnto vs which are his, forasmuch as we are made one bodye with him, hee promisseth therefore a gouernemente ouer the gentils, and that of such power, that we shall rule the rebellious and stubborne with an iron scepter, and shall bruse them in peces, like crthen vessels. That is, all our enemies being troden downe, and all the thieringes of our aduersaries, brought to naught, we shall quietly inioye the possession of the heauenly kingdome vnder Christ which is our head.

Uers. 18. ¶ Euen as I receiued of my father so will I geue him the morning starre. &c.

VVhatsoeuer thinges, Christ by reason of his manhode is sayd to haue receined of his father, he receiued them for vs, and not for him self, he is that morning starre which rising in our hartes, driueth away all darckes of blindenesse. And we also as morning starres, ye as the sunne it (self by his benifit) shall shine in his heauenly kingdome, howsoeuer the deuill and his ministers, with infinite sleaunders and lies oppressing our innocencie, do labour to obscure and darcken our name.

Uers. 19. Let him that hath an eare heare what the spirite saith to the Churches.

A Tuerie seuerall admonition he repeteth this, least wee should let them pas without due consideration,

The

Verf. 1. And write vnto the aungell of the church of Sardis these things saith he.



THE first epistle is sent to the Angell of the church which was at Sardis. where as first it is profitable to note, that although the estate of that church was moste corrupte, that is: wholye almost deserued to be called deade, yet Christ doth adorne it with the name of a Church, flatte againste the frenstie errors of certaine men, which now here acknowledg a church to be where their is any thinge, which doth not in all points please them. On the other side the papistes do not require any thing moze earnestly, and with greater contention, then that we wold graunt the name of the church to there company for certaine hundred yeares, in which the truth was almoste buried. If that for a fewer, which it is certaine were saued, of that huge masse and multitude, we shoulde attribute this name vnto them, yet neuer the latter we may say with Christ, thou hast a name that thou liuest and yet in very deede thou art dead. For althinges are not by and by righte: where we maye acknowledge a Church to be

That hath the seuen spirites of god, and the seuen flares I knowe thy workes

This preface also euen as the rest, doth very well agree to the matter: which is intreated of in the epistell. For he had to doe with a pastor and Church, which he complaineth to be dead, and life is giuen onely by the spirite of God. They therefore which had almoste quenched the spirite of God as muche as in them laye oughte to haue soughte to him, whiche alone doeth geue the same spirite to those that aske of him. For Christ, from his father sendeth the holye ghost vpon the Church, as he himselfe often witnesseth. John 14. 15. 16. chapter. Of the number of the spirites we haue spoken before in the 1. Cha. vs. 4. That he also holdeth 7 seue flares in his hand, he

admonisheth

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admonish the pastour that he could not hereterto haue remayned in any parte of life, but that he should vtrly haue died, excepte the Lorde had susteined and kepte him by his vertue and power, from extreme destruction.

Thou hast a name that thou liuest, but thou art dead. &c. Thou art counted among the number of those which liue vnto God and haue renounced the world, when as yet thou liuest to the world and to thy selfe, and art counted as dead before God. For if a widow which liueth in pleasures, be dead eue lining as Danle saith, how much more the pastour of the church, (which by preaching of the worde of God, ought after a sort, to breath into others the spirituall life) may be counted as dead, except he renounce the deuill, the flesh, and all the vaine inticementes of the world, and fraime his whole life to the obedience of Christ. And we neuerthelesse in the meane while so long as we haue a name y we liue, do giue our selues ouer to pleasures, we liue to the world, we are dead to Christ. For except the Image of God be renued in vs, in vaine wee boast of the grace of Christ, which is not idle in those, whome it hath truely embraced. Neither ought we to seuer Christ from his Spirit. The Spirit truely can not but worke effectuously in those, which Christ by the grace of regeneration shall call to newnesse of life. This place doth teach, what great danger hangeth ouer the Churches, through pastours that are halfe dead, when as the infection proceeding out of one, doth spread ouer almost the whole flocke.

Uers. 2. We awake and strengthen the thinges which remaine that are readie to dye. &c.

This admonition dothe shewe, that this pastour was not vtrly dead & without all recovery, but oppressed euen as with a deadly slepe, and except he should speedely be helped, he would straitway, yeld vp the ghost. He counselleth him therefore that he without delay awake out of this sleepely sickenes, & that he be carefull to call backe againe into life those thinges that were euen then readie to die, as if hee should say, that he was so nygh destruction, that death hath eue now attached some
of his

of his members, and his whole bodie was euen at deathes doze, excepte he speedely shake of this droulines. That he commaundeth him to awake, he signifieth that nothinge is more vnmete for a pastor of the church, then he giue him self to sleepes, whom it behoueth to watch continually ouer his flocke. ¶ For I haue not found thy workes perfect before God. &c.

He which before sayd that he knew his workes, now sheweth of what sort they were, that is, not sound, but imperfect, and which betrayed his inward hypocrisy. For how beautifull soeuer they appeared in the eyes of men, yet before God they are found vnperfect. But are not the workes of the best and godliest, (so long as they are compassed aboute with the infirmitie of the flesh) also imperfect? I confesse they be. But here I say, that soundnes is opposed to hypocrisy, and not to perfection, which perfectly fullfillerth the whole law of God.

Remember therefore what thinges thou hast receaued & heard and hold fast therfore and repent &c. He ministrerth a fit medecine to the disease. Continual slepe had brought forgetfulness. He commaundeth him therefore to call to remembrance the doctrine which he had receyued and heard, and hold the same and to repent for those things which were committed against it. we are taught here that forgetfulness of the heauenly doctrine brought forth this death of y^e soule, into which he had fallen, so that it is no meruail, if where it bee altogether silent, (as it is in the papacie) although there all godlines do utterlye die.

If thou shalt not watch I will come on the as a thefe and thou shalt not know what houre I will come vpo^e thee. They that are oppressed with a deepe slepe, are not awaked without great cries and often repeated. Againe therefore he commaundeth him to awake, for if he goe on in geuing him self to slepe, it will come to pas, that the lord wil strike him with soze vengeance he not thinking it. And no ootherwise then theues are wont to breake vp there houses which are drowned in a dead slepe and to flea them, suspecting no such matter, and to spoil them being slayn of all there goodes: so Christ threateneth that
his

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his coming shalbe vncertaine to him, which except he shall pꝛeuent with wailing and repentaunce, his eternal saluation is vtterly lost.

Notwithstanding thou hast a few names in Sardy. &c. By these woordes he sheweth, that this rebuke did not pertaine to all the partes and members of the church, but to the moste parte. For he confesseth that there are a few, whome he also knoweth by name, whiche haue kepte them selues cleane and vnspotted from those heynoule vices. Christ doeth not contemne the small number of these, ye he doth moze esteeme two or thre which worship him sincerely, then the infinite multitude of worshollinges, which despise his commaundements. It is better therefore to be one of these few, whose innocencie Christ testifieth that he doth approue and allow, them to be of the huge multitude of those, which delighting them selues in there filthy pleasures, the Lord counteth as deade.

Which haue not defiled there garments. &c. The reason of this Metaphoꝛ seemeth to bee, that those whiche haue geuen there names to Christ in baptisme, haue put on Christ as a garment, that is, haue pꝛofessed righteousnes, which garment they doe filthely defile, with wicked concupiscences and woꝛkes of darkenes as manye, as like the dogge to his vomite, and the sow to the myze, doe returne to there olde flesheleꝝ conuersation.

And therefore they shall walke with me in white. &c. He promisseth to the godlye, that they shall not want the rewarde of there sounde and vpright liuinge, so; as they haue not bene partakers with the wicked in there sinnes, so lyke wise they shalbe free from there punishmentes.

For they are worthy. Because it is equity and right that they which haue lyued godly and vncorruptly, shoulde receiue the rewarde of righteousnes promised them in Christ. For he doth not here reason concerning the desertes of woꝛkes, which euē the very papistes them selues do not maintaine, that they doe iustifie so; there woꝛthinnesse, neither concerning the meꝛites

rits of congruite, because all this dignity doeth depend vpon the promises of God, and they are grounded in his free sauoure he beinge pacified in Christ. For good woorkes are neither ours, for they are the giftes of God, neither perfectly good, in so much as they be ours, therefore we cannot deserue any thing by them. Moreover this is a notable consolation to the faithfull, which line in that company where they see the wrath of God by many mens sinns daily prouoked, that they may be of good comfort, that God will not punnishe them together with the wicked, with whom they haue not consented in sinne and iniquity.

Act. 5. He that ouercometh shall be clothed in white arraye. &c.

As well they which shall become conquerers in rising out of the pernicious slepe of security, as they which are neuer overcome of the same drounke dyscase, shall receiue white garments the rewarde of innocēcy and victorie, and the token and badge of true blessednesse.

And I will not put out his name out of the booke of lyfe, &c. That is they shall receiue the crowne of eternall lyfe. But for those, which here do labour to ouerthrow the holy predestination of God, we must vnderstand, that two bookes of lyfe are mentioned in the holy scriptures, the one of election, the other of calling of the former Paule speaketh in the 4. chapter to the philippians: the 3. verse. & S. Iohn in this reuelat: chap. 12. verse. 8. & 20. vers. 12. & 22. verse 27. Of the later, y psalmist speaketh, when he saith, let them be blotted out of the booke of life, & let them not be writtē with the iuste. And God saith to Moyses, I will wipe those out of the booke which haue sinned against me. Cro. 31. of which this place may not vnfitly be vnderstode: as if hee should say, by there wickednes they haue deserued, that I should wipe them out of the booke of life, yet if they shall repent, I will not make voide there first calling. For as pertainyng to election, we are taught by infinite testimonies of scripture, that it shall remaine alwayes vchangeable. But manye are called and few are chosen.

But I will confesse his name before my father and before

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his Aungells. If anye man be not ashamed of Christ in earth Christ wil not be ashamed of him in heauen. For he comforteth the faithfull whome the worlde hath alwaies despised, yee he promisetht that hee will acknowledge them for his owne, before the Aungells, so that they kepe the confession of there faith pure and constant euen to the ende.

Verse. 6. He that hath an eare let him heare what the spirite saith to the Churches. &c.

When as this sentence cometh so often, it teacheth that these admonitions whiche the Lorde geueth to the churches, are not carelesly and lightly to be passed ouer.

Verse. 7. And write vnto the church which is at philadelphia, these thinges saith he that is holy and true. &c.

In the first epistle the pastour of the church of Philadelphia is praised, and receiueht comfort against the daungers that were at hand, and hanging ouer him. First therfore Christ beginneth his preface with those thinges whiche are most fitte to confirme and strengthen this pastour, that he him selfe is holy & true. Whye because that being fully consecrated to God his Father, he doth sanctifie the whole church, which is his body: wherevppon hee is saied to be made to vs of God, holines, & righteousness, and redemption, (True) not only because that he is most free from all lyinge and dissimulation, to which all mankinde is subiecte, wherby also he deserueth to be called the trueth it selfe, but also because he alone hath set forth true doctrine, y this pastour may acknowledg by whose benefite he hath embraced true doctrine, and is numbred amonge the saintes of God, that is by the benefite of Christ, which is holy and true. What can the Romaine prelates here aunswere, that they chalenge to them selues the office of sanctifyinge, that they boast and bragge that they cannot erre, that the pope doth suffer himselfe to be called not only holy, but most holye, and holines it selfe: are they not blasphemouse againste Christ which alone is holy and true?

Which hath the key of dauid, which openeth and no man shuteth, thatteth and no man openeth. &c. Which hath full power

power ouer the house of Dauid, that is his Church, whiche so hath granted the keies of the kingdome of heauen to his ministers, that yet he kepeth them to him selfe, which hath so committed the gouernement of his Church to Pastours, that he may not in the meane time abrogate his owne auctorite. For least that vnder the pretence of the keies, the Prelats shold chaleng auctoritie and rule ouer the Church to appoint euerie thing at there owne pleasure, he maketh this preface, that he onely hath the keye of Dauid and openeth and shutteth at his owne pleasure, as Lorde and ruler, whome no mortall creature can withstande whether hee open or shutte. For although he promise that he will subscribe and agree in heauen to the sentence giuen by the Pastours, if they shall lose or bynde any thing in earth, yet this is so to be vnderstande, when men bring forth for decrees, the Iudgement of God, and not there owne fantasies. As concerninge the Pastour of the Church of Philadelphia, hee oughte to be admonished euen by this preface onely, that hee by the auctoritie of Christ whom nothing can resist either in heauen or earth, is called to that function and office in the Church, and by his vertue shalbe helped in discharging his dutie, and shalbe kepte free from violence of all enemies.

Act. 8.

I know thy woorkes. &c.

Christ doth acknowledge that the woorkes of this pastour did please him, which mighte be in neede of a spurre, that he might cherefully go forwarde in the course he had once begunne, for what greater rewards ought wee to wishe? Then that we may do somewhat that is thanckfull and accepted of God.

Beholde I haue set before thee an open dore. &c. Saint Paul vsed this Metaphoze, when as he wold shew the great hope propounded vnto him of spreadinge abroad the Gospell in the 1. Corin. 16. And it doth fitly agree, that Christ doth open vnto vs the gate of the heauenlye kingdome, when hee prepareth a waie to saith, by the preachinge of the Gospell.

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And no man can shutte it. &c. Hee meaneth that there wilbe enemies which will labour harde, to hinder and let the course of the Gospell, but they shall trouble them selues in vaine. For in spite of the deuill and his Angells, a doze is opened which no force of the enemye shalbe able to shut.

For thou hast a litle strength and hast kepte my sayinges and hast not denied my name. &c. An argumente of a synccere affection, that almost aboue his strength which Christ confesseth to be but small: he stode constant and stable in the true and most free confession of the faith. For not alwaies he which God hath indued with greater giftes and fit to the same, hath the greatest care to set forth the Gospell. For you may see manye which excell in doctrine and knowledge of tongues, and yet be verie colde, and almost dumbe in spreading abroade the Gospell: when as in the meane time, those that are indued but with meane knowledge, doe labour abundantly in the hartness of the Lords, whose laboures, as here we maye see, Christ him selfe will vouchsafe to blesse moze plentifully. This place doth also beat downe y false Nicodemites, when as it teacheth y none other can rightely kepe the doctrine of Christ, but those which neuer denie his name.

Mat. 9. Behold I will make them of the synagog of Sathan to wit them which called them selues Jewes, and are not, but doe lye. Behold I say I will make them that they shall come & worship befoze thy feete & shall know that I haue loued thee.

HE sheweth that the diligent labour and constancie of this Discour had proccaded so farre, that he should by his study and diligence drawe some euen oute of the Flawes of Sathan. For he saith that euen of the number of those, (which falsely would be named Jewes when as neuertheless they were the synagog of Sathan, because by all meanes they persecuted the Church of God) certayne should come, which should humbly desire and craue pardon for ther heynouse offences, & should confesse & acknowledg earnestly, that he was deare to god whom they vexed hether to with so great hatred. For in my iudgement, it can hardly be understode of stubberne persons, which are compelled againste there willes to make this confession.

For

For that oughte not to be restrained to few but pertaineth to all the wicked which are the synagog of Sathan, excepte per-
adventure he would note those, especially of that whole rout
which aboue al others were most troublesome to this pastour
whom he saied shoulde at length be drinen to repentaunce, &
confession of their sinnes, when it shoulde be to late.

Uers. 10.

Because thou hast kept.

Christ will not suffer there hope to be in vaine, which shall
patiently wait for his aide and succour. For he promiset
deliuerance to this pastour frō most great dangers, whiche
did hang ouer the worlde for sinne: because his faith and con-
stancy were proued by many experiments & sufficiently wit-
nessed to him and to the world.

The wordes of my pacience, therefore I will deliuer thee
from the time of temptation which will come vppon all the
worlde, to try them that dwell in the earth. As this pastoure
suffered not the doctrine of pacience to slyde from him, which
Christ requireth of his seruants, but held it euen in the most
fore temptations, and in very deepe expressed it in his acts &
doings, so Christ promiset in scede of a most ample reward,
that he woulde kepe him likewise by his mercy out of muche
more bitter calamities which shortly after should light vpon
the whole worlde. He nameth it the hower of temptation, to
teach, that the times of afflictions be appointed of God, how
longe men shoulde be chasticed, that they shoulde labour in
vaine to deliuer them selues oute of the same, whiche doe not
patiently waite, for the ende determined & apointed of god.
Moreover he calleth afflictions temptations or triales because
they bewray men what they are. For the reprobate fret, and
rage, or else despayre & alwayes seeke oute vnlawfull meanes
to escape contrarywise the godly do acknowledge the mighty
hand of God, to whiche they do patiently submit them selues,
or if at the most being overcome with impaciency of sorowes
they desire to escape, by vn honest meanes, yet they neuer fume
or rise vp against God.

Uers. 11.

Beholde I come shortly.

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This is added in steede of an exceeding great consolation, that he mighte not feare that the time of his deliuerance should long be deferred, and that whatsoeuer battaile remayneth, he might sustayne it with more quiet minde. For it hath great force to perswade vs to patience, when we knowe that our labour shall shortly come to an ende. Therefore the holye ghost so often in the Scriptures setteth before oure eyes the shortnesse of our battail, that we may contend more strongly, and beare patiently our labour and trauaill.

Hold that which thou hast, that no man take thy crowne. &c. Onely (sayeth he) hold the simplicitie of doctrine, & go forward in the conuersation of a sound life: do not so behaue thy selfe, that thou which hast herther to fought manfully in defence of the Gospell, shouldst now at length euen in the last brunt ware weary, and in being vanquished, shouldst lose the crowne of victorie, which Christ our Captaine would shortly after haue set vpon thy head.

Ierl. 12. Him that ouercometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write vpon him the name of my God, and the name of the cite of my God, which is the new Ierusalem which cometh downe from God out of heauen, and I will write vpon him my new name. &c.

They were wont to set vp trophies & pillars with inscriptions vpon them, for those which had behaued them selues manfully, and became conquerers in battail against their enemies, as well to shewe them selues thankefull to them which had susteyned so great labours for the safegard of their country, as also that they might sterre vp others to imitate & folow their vertues. But Christ will make his champions pillars, not in the market place, or in the field of Mars, at Rome, but in the holy temple of his God, that is in the Church triumphant, in which they shall be made partakers of all the good giftes which God shall vouchsafe to bestow vpon his Church. And where as the trophies & monumentes of princes, either through enuie of their successors, or by madness of the people are often throwne downe: Christ promisseth that this conqueror shall be fixed in so sound a foundation in him selfe, which is the

the verie foundation of the temple, that he can neuer be pulled out or cast downe from thence. Moreover he doth assigne three kindes of inscriptions for this pillar. The first of the name of god, by which it is declared to be consecrated to God. The second of new Ierusalem which shall descend from heauen, by which he is taught that his freedom of that heauenly citie pertaineth vnto him. The thirde inscription is the new name of Christ which is giuen him for his excellent obedience & humilitie euen vnto death, which is about all names, that in the name of Iesus euery knee should bow of thinges in heauen & thinges in earth, & of thinges vnder the earth. By the inscription of this name. Christ will take this pillar into his partaking of his glory. whereby we are admonished that it is Christ alone which may consecrate vs to God the father, into holy pillars of his temple. that it is Christ alone that may bestow vpon vs the title of the heauenly Ierusalem, and to conclude, that it is Christ alone that may call vs to the fellowship of his heauenly kingdome, we oughte therefore valiantly to fighte vnder him, that we may attayne so great ornaments of victorie.

Act. 13. He that hath an eare let him heare what the spirit saith to us.

A worthe voice truly which should alwaies sound in our hartes & eares that the flattering voices of this world being contented, we may strongly gird vpon our loynes to his battail.

1. Cor. 14. And to the Church of the Church which is at Laodicia write, these things saith Amen, the faithfull and true witnesse, the beginning of the creatures of God. &c.

The last epistle is written to the luke warme pastor of the Church of Laodicia, to whom also a fitt & conuenient preface is made, as vnto all the rest, that is, that these thinges are spoken of him, which is Amen, that is constant, and not a coloured truthe, as S. Paule saith, that all the promises of God in Christ are yea and Amen 2. Cor. 1. which is a faithfull witnesse & true, and therefore can not suffer halting betwene both partes. For as he hath truly and saythfully declared the embassage committed to him of his father, so he requireth also suche ministers as should imploye all there whole strength in this, that the dignite & auctoritie of the Gospell, may be extolled

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about all thinges.

The beginning of the creatures of God. &c. That worde by which all thinges are made, to which all the creatures are bound to yeald there full and perfect obedience, neither ough they by any meanes to geue part to the worlde, and parte to the selues of that obeysaunce which is due vnto him. For our sed is he y^e doth the worke of the Lord negligently, whom we oughte to worship and reuerence, with all oure harte with all our soule, & with all our strength, neither to make any excuse, by which we maye be with drawne by any meanes from his obedience. For he doth renounce the obedience of Christ, that doth not wholly submit him selfe vnto him, which doth neuer alowe any halting obedience.

Act. 15. 16. I know thy woordes that thou art neither colde nor hotte
I would thou werest cold or hotte. Therefore because thou art betwene both, neither cold nor hotte it will come to pas that
I shall spew the out of my mouth. &c.

WE ought to be as S. Iuale saith feruent in spirite, that is, bent with all feruentnes of minde, to set forth the glozy of Christ. The lukewarmnes therefore of this pastour and his Church is worthely reprechēded, that nether they burned with y^e zeale, that they ought, to haue defended y^e glozie of god, neither were they altogether cold in mayntayning the same. But Christ pronounceth that he doth hate this lukewarmnes, so that his stomake can not beare meate that hath so euill Iuice and nurrishment in it, but that he would vomit it vp. For that they flattered them selues as though they should bee notable Christians, if they were not professed enemies of his name, but shold p^rofesse and acknowledge his doctrine so farre peradventure as shoulde bee for there p^rofite and commoditie: Christ sheweth that this is but in vaine, because, excepte they woulde wholly frame the selues to y^e obedience of his worde, they shoulde not remayne as his members in his body whiche is the Church, but shoulde be cast out with his very great loathing & detestation. In that he wisheth they were either hot or cold, he meaneth not that they do any waies please him which are cold, but that he is so farre from alowing the lukewarme,
that

that hee had rather they were colde, that is his professed enemies. For they do more hurt to the ouerthrowing of the faith of the simple which craftely thrust in them selues vnder some colour and shew of religion, then they which with open blasphemies teare the name of the Christ, of whome euerie one can easely beware. It is merueill but Christ here by the spirite of prophesye, hath expressed the state and condition of oure Churches vnder the figure of the byshop of Laodicia, and nothing is more to be feared, then if we shall perceyue at length to our great hurt, that these terrible threatenings do also belong to vs. The like metaphors Iosua and Helias vsed, when they forbade the people to halt on both partes, and commaunded them either to folow God onely, or Baale onely.

Act. 17. For thou sayest I am rich and increased with goodes & haue neede of nothing and knowest not how thou art wretched and miserable, and poore and blinde and naked. &c.

ALL burning zeale was not onely quenched in him, which is euill, but mozeouer he was infected with a foule hypercriste, which is much worse. And it almost alwaies cometh to pas, that they which are scarcely any thing at all hotte in promoting the worship of god, and the confession of faith, yet neuertheless, do boast them selues to bee verie great prelates of the truth, and most sharpe defendozes of the faith. As this pastour boasterh him selfe to be rich, and not contented with this, hee braggethe that his riches are increased into a great heape, so that he wanted nothing, but had the abundance of all thinges, euen to satietie: when as by the iudgement of Christ he was the most miserable & most poore, yea beggerly, blinde, and naked. we see howe that Christ spoilet he them of all there goodes, which arrogantly chalenge to them selues riches, and the abundance of all thinges.

Act. 18. I counsell the to buy of me gold tried in the fire that thou maist be made rich. &c.

NOwe least the state and condition of this pastour should seme altogether desperate and incurable, hee exhorte the him to repentance, & first of all to the acknowledging of this his pouertie, that he might find true riches in Christ, who cos-

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sellethe him that he buy gold of him tried in y^e fire, that is, most precious gould, which is, that he should seeke the flowing abundance of all good thinges at his handes, whiche sellethe it freely without taking any money, but yet to those, to whom nothinge is moze precious and deare then y^e grace of Christ. For he that will bye that field in which the treasure lieth hid, and that pearle which of all others is moste precious, must not cheapen lyke the hucksters, but sell all that he hath y^e he may enioy so great treasures, that is to exteme as nothinge all other thinges, so that he may possesse the riches of the grace of Christ.

And white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, and that thy fylthy nakednes do not appeare. &c. For he was naked so that his filthynes was open and manifest to God & his Angells, vntill he put vppon him the righteousness and innocency of Christ, wherby his filthyness being couered, he may approach into the presence of God decently arayed.

And anoynt thine eyes with eye salue that thou maicst see &c. Vnto all these miseries was added so great blindenes, that wheras he was void of all good thinges, a begger, filthy, and naked, yet he could espie none of all these things, but thought himselfe to be in moste blessed estate. For hypocrisie is alwayes blinde, and by the iuste iudgement of God this blindnes is caste before the eyes of hypocrites, that when they thinke they may without daunger mocke both God and men, they deceiue their selues so much, that other whiles they are dead before they feele them selues sicke. And when they walke naked and in the sighte of all men, they thinke themselves to be gayly clothed. Such men haue neede of this eye salue to anoynt their eyes wall, that they may be deliuered out of so great darkenes. This metaphor doth signifye that when we are lightened with the spirit of Christ, we doe clearly see all thinges, or elles we see no moze in those thinges that pertaine to eternall life, then strakes or stones.

Uers. 19. Those whom I loue I chastice, be zelous therfore & amend.

That he maye know that there is mercy in store for him, if with earnest affection of mind he returne to God, he sheweth that

that this reprehension proceeded of fatherly loue and not of spightfull hate. For whome God loueth most, he doth not onely rebuke them with woordes, but also chastise them with strypes sometimes. For so doth hee bydle our wantonnesse, which if it were not refrayned with such byddelles, we would runne hedlong to our owne destruction. Therefore wee are much bound to the mercie of God, that he had rather chastise vs with rodde, then kyll vs with swoordes, which proceedeth of nothing els, but of his fatherly loue towarde vs. But as touching this pastor of Laodicea, hee requireth these two thinges of him, firste that hee repente him of his former thoughtfulness and negligens, and secondely that hereafter he be kindled with a greater zeale to set forth y^e glory of Christ, and so follow Dauid, whome y^e zeale of Gods house had eaten vp altogether, and all other the saintes of God, which cannot otherwise shew that they loue God entierly, then if they be wholly set on fire with zeale of aduancing the glory of his name. For as we herde a litle before he can in no wise abide them that are neither hot nor colde.

Uersus. 20. Behold I stand before the doore and knocke and if any man heare my voice and open the doore. &c.

The loue of Christ toward the Church is wonderfull great. whiche is so zelus and carefull for there health, whiche burne with no zeale to set forth his glory. The verbe in greke is of the preterperfectes. whereby he signifieth y^e he hath long agoe looked y^e they shold repent from the bottom of their hart, & receiue his grace into there hart. Whorouer this place doth playnly teach vs, that we cannot rightly receyue Christ, before he first offer him selfe to be receiued of vs.

I will enter in vnto him & will suppe with him. &c. The gentlenes & mercie of y^e Lord is meruelous, which so willingly pardoneth so great iniuries done vnto him by his seruā, that forgetting all iniuries he doth of his own accord offer pardon & in signe of perfect reconciliation, he will gently come & suppe with him. For men are wont by such tokens to renew friendship y^e is broken betwene thē. But those whō Christ voutsaluet to be partakers of his table (as hee voutsalueth all the faith-

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faithfull) he feedeth there mindes with spirituall daynties, whereby they shalbe nourished vnto eternall lyfe, namelye with rightuousnes freely giuen, quietnes of consciens, & vnspeakable ioye. where with the godlye are fedde by the holye ghost, wherof also he hath giuen a most excellent pledge, the holy cōmuniō of his bodie and blood, which when we receyue by faith, we haue him euerlastingly dwelling with vs.

1 Cor. 11. To him that shal ouercome I will graunt to sit with me in my throne, euen as I ouercame and sit with my father in his throne. &c.

HE that shall continue faithfull vnto the end and with feruente zeale shall promote the glorie of Christ, him dothe Christe admitte vnto the partakinge of his heauenly glorie. And as hee him selfe is sette in the throne of maiestie of his father for a rewarde of his victorie: so will he aduance them vnto the height of his throne, which through sayth shall obtaigne victorie against the deuill and the worlde. For by faith we are made heyres of God and fellow heyres with Christ.

1 Cor. 12. He that hath an eare let him heare what the spirit

HE concludeth this first vision with this his vsuall acclamation that this doctrine of the holye ghoste is worthe, which should be imprinted in the mindes of all the seruants of Christ, and alwaies be remembered of them, that it may obteyne dewe effecte in vs through Christ oure Lorde to whom be honour and glorie. &c.

¶ The fourth Chapter.



THE second vision is conteyned in the eight Chapters following, in which the state and condition of the Church is liuely described and painted out, of what sort it shalbe, frō that time forth, euen to the ende of the worlde. The first parte of this vision which is comprehended in this. 4. Chapter, conteyneth a discription of the diuine maiestie and glorie of God, in whiche the faithfull are taught that they ought not to faint or quake, no not in gretest

rest daungers, which are gouerned by his wondrousfull counsell who aboue all thinges hath tender care, ouer the health & safetie, of his Church. And when as all thinges bothe in heauen and earth do celebrate, and set forth the praises of God, it is not conuenient by any meanes, that the same praises should not sound forth, in the Church militant.

Verf. 1.

After this I looked. &c.

After that first vision which principally was set forth to describe the state of the seuen Churches, he saith there was an other vision shewed vnto him, which did expresse the state and condition of the whole Church, of what sorte it should be in the world, from that time, euen vnto the ende and consummation of all thinges.

And behold a dore was open. &c. By these woordes hee sheweth, that a passage was made open vnto him, to the knowing of these misteries, which except this dore be opened are so included and shut vp in heauen, that they farre exceede the capacitie of earthly men. The philosophers haue diligently searched and discusse all thinges whatsoener are comprehended within the circutie and compasse of the heauens, and with metuailous sharpenesse of sight, haue perced euen vnto the secretes of nature: but as for those thinges, whiche are aboue the highest sphere of firmament, either they were altogether ignorant of the, or els if they boasted the selues to know the same they waxed vaine in there owne cogitations, and I know not what monsterous thinges they haue set forth in steede of diuine misteries. As it is to be sene in Plato, Trismegistus & others, whiche men, while they would measure the secretes of Gods maiestie by the compass of there owne braine, they wholly despised that one onely waye, by whiche access is giuen to so great secretes, that is the reuelation of God, which is chiefly set forth and declared in his worde. Let vs therefore alwaies retayne & hold this principle, that we can not, although with neuer so sharp speculations, see those thinges whiche are in heauen, excepte God open the dore vnto vs. How much more is the boldenesse, or rather I may say, the Impudencie of the
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foole men, which although neither by visions, neither by the word of God, so much as a riste is opened vnto them, yet as though they had thoroughly seene and knowne all the secretes in heauen, they dispute and reason of the incomprehensible essence of God, and of other misteries, which I beleue the angels themselves dare scarcely medle withall.

And the first voice which I herde, as it were of a trumpet talking with me sayed come vp hether. &c. Although the doze were opened to him in heauen, yet he durst not enter in, but being called by þe heauēly voice, for such modestie becometh the seruauntes of God, that they waite for his voice in all thinges which they attempt: But in that hee sayeth it was like a trumpet, he signifieth that he was called with a lowde and a shrill voice, that he might be more attentine in considering those thinges which the holy ghost would reueale vnto him. Come vp (saith he) herher & I will shew vnto the, those thinges that must come to passe hereafter. When was taken vp in spirite euen into heauen, that he might beholde this vision, therefore with the greater studie and reuerence, it becometh vs to be occupied in searching out these misteries, & to haue regard both vnto the heauēly wisdomē, & to the lone of Christ, which would reueale this visiō, to the edifying of his Church.

Verf. 1. And immediatly I was rauished in the spirite and beheld a throne was set in heauen and one sat on it. &c.

After this voice saith he, I was drawn into a traicte and my spirite being taken vp into heauen, I beheld those thinges which were set as it were before mine eyes. In the highest place of heauen an highe throne was set, magnifically adorned, in which one did sit of vnspcakable glory to beholde, whome by euident notes, I knew to be the maiestie of God. But here two doubts arise, first that he saith a throne was set in heauen, whereas the Lord doth glory in the prophete & saie that the whole heauen is his seate: and also he sheweth that he saw the Maiestie of God, when we reade so ofte in the scriptures, that God is inuisible. We aunswere to both, that God is not here described as he is, which filleth the heauen and the earth

earth neither can be seen with the eyes of men, but for the capacite of our witte, that we maye acknowledge him as king and Emperour sitting vpon his seate, to whome all thinges are subiect. God is described here bearing the persone a king, whose gouernement & lawes, it is necessarie the whole world should obey.

Uers. 3. And he that sat was to looke vpon like vnto a Jasper Stone and a Sardine stone, and there was a rainebow about the throne in sight like to an emeralde &c.

TO the imbecitie and weaknes of man, nothing semethe more beautifull, then precious stones. His countenance therefore was like to the two precious stones, Jasper & Sardine, of which Plinie saierth, the one hath a certayne waterlike shining, the other a fire. The rainebowe compassing his throne and shining, like the greene emeralde, doth extoll the glorie of his throne, aboue all the benches of men. And it is verie like that by these two figures, the power and mercie of God are liuely expressed. For by that warrie & fiery bewtie of his countenance shininge like Jasper & Sardine, it is probable his power & iustice are signified, which as it was once shewed in tyme past, in drowning his whole world so it shalbe made manifest at the lēgth, in the consummatiō of the world with fire. The rainebow which was a sacramēt of the couenaunt which God made with men, doth without doubte shew forth his incōprehensible mercy, which cōpassing his whole throne aboute, is a meruailous great ornament to the same. The feeling whereof although it be figured by his cherefull colour of the emerald, yet it doth excede infinitely, the bewty of all precious stones.

Uers. 4. And about the seat were 24. seates and vpon the seates I saw 24. elders sitting clothed in white raiment and had on there heades crownes of gold. &c.

That the Maiestie of Gods glorie mighte more clearly be set forth, there is ioyned vnto him the reuerende company of 24. elders. For kinges are wonte, when they consulte of weyghtie matters, or when they will shew forth there glory to the people, for the greater maiestie, to ioynē there counsell vnto them. So the holpe ghost, when as he would according to the capa-

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capacitie of mans wit, describe the gloze of God in governing the whole world and principally his Church, expressed it vnder such a like figure. And this number of senators, both signifie the whole companie of Gods electe. But especially of those, which hauing synished there labours in earth, are taken vp vnto the felowship of the heavenly glorie. And in my iudgement hee alludeth, to that promise of Christ, by which hee promised to his Apostles, which sarieth with him in all his temptations, that they should sit vpon 12. seates, & should iudge the 12. tribes of Israell Mat. 19. and Luke the 22. where as the number of twelue is not restrained to the Apostles onely, like as it doth not extende to them all. For at that time Judas had the office of an Apostle, but it pertayneth to all the electe. And although I will not to carefullye search for misteries in numbers, yet the nuber of twelue here doubled, semeth to me to comprehend the Church gathered together into one body of the Jewes and gentiles. The elders therefore are placed in thrones, that they may alowe by there consent, the iust iudgement of God, which he will execute vpon the world, and also may for euer celebrate and set forth his magnificence. The apparel and deckinge of these 24. elders is described, that they were clothed in white garmentes, and had crownes of golde vpon there heades. white raiment in time past, was the signe & token of noble men, first therefore it comendeth the dignitie of those whome God by his mercie hath called to the adoptiō of his children: and afterward the righteousnesse & innocēcie, which they haue, not of them selues, but borow, it of the blood of Christ. The golden Diademes, are signes of victorie and kingly dignitie, for they that throughe the vertue and power of Christ, haue overcome the worlde by faithe, shall receiue a crowne of him, & moreover shall be admitted in to the felowshippe of his kingdome. No meruaile therefore though these elders can neuer satisfie them selues in celebrating the praises of God & of Christ, when as by his benefite, they are diuine oute of so great calamities, and exalted to so great honour.

Reuel. 5. And out of the throne proceeded lighteninges, and thunders
ringes

ringes and voices and seuen lampes of fyre burninge before the throne which are the seuen spirites of God. &c.

IT is not to be doubted but y^e the holy ghoſte according to his diuine eſſence doth ſit euen in the throne of maieſty with the father and the ſonne, yet by his vertue which is ſpreade ouer all through whiche he ſetteth forth the power, wiſedome and goodnes of God towarde his creatures, hee is ſaid to procede oute of the throne where the maieſty of God doth ſit, and his ſoyre and ſtrength is expreſſed by two figures: of which the one doeth nothing but ſtrike a feare and terroz, the other is ſweete and pleaſant. Out of the throne, (ſaith he) procede lightnings, thunders, ringes, and voices, and ſeuen lamps burning with fyre, which are the ſeuen ſpirites of God. An enſample of either of them is ſet forth in the law, and the goſpell. For y^e law as it conteyneth nothinge but y^e whiche is fearefull and terrible, ſo in time paſt when it was deliuered forth in mount Sinai, it was painted oute by ſuche ſignes and tokens. But the lighte of the goſpell is acceptable to the hertes of the faithfull, which he promiſed ſhould come vpon thoſe which ſat in darkeneſſe and in the ſhadowe of death, and at length it was ſet forth to the worlde, by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and is dayly ſet forth by the ſincere preaching of his worde. I confeſſe that there is alſo ſome light of the law, but yet ſuch as hath feare and terroz mingled with it, as lightning hath: but the pleaſaunt and harmeleſſe light of the goſpell is fitly expreſſed by y^e ſeuen lāpes. The nūber of ſeuen is y^e nūber of perfection & fulneſſe. It ſignifieth therefore all the giſtes & graces of the holy ghoſt, wherewith god doth beutiſy & adorne his Church, and the preachinge of the goſpell. And it is no new thing, that the ſignes & effectes haue the name of that thing which they reſpect or follow. But wherfoze they are called many, whē there is but one ſpirite it is declared before in the firſt chapter.

Verſe. 6. And before the throne there was a ſea of glaſſe lyke vnto cryſtall. &c.

THe ſtate of this worlde is in the ſight of God, whiche is expreſſed by a ſea of glaſſe, for althoughe it ſeme to vs diuers, in con-

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inconstant mouable and fraile (which is signified by the glasse sea) yet to God whiche governeth it by his will and pleasure it appeareth sure, stable, and disposed in the best order, and more cleare then anye christall, because nothinge which cometh to pas in the worlde, is hid from his prouidence, and although it be such that the Church maye seme euerye moment to be ouerwhelmed and drowned with the waues of y^e same, yet all daunger of drowning thereof is far of. So y^e although we thinke that this sea doth rage with surges and terrible tempests, yet by the prouidence of God, the welfare of the church is as safe, as though the byldinge thereof were founded vppon a dry and hard rocke of christall, and not as a shippe shoulde be tossed to and fro in a swellinge and tempestuous sea. For this worlde and all things therein are governed by the will and pleasure of God, that nothing can hurt or hinder the saluation of those whom he hath taken into his defence and keepinge.

And in the midst of the throne and rounde about the throne. &c. We seeth the throne of God to be borne vp of foure beastes lyke the seat of kinges, or the triumphall chariot of emperours not that his glory needeth anye suche aydes, but because he doeth meruailously shine in the blessed spirits which he hath created, in which sence also Paule calleth the Angells thrones in the Col. 1. chap. Moreover when as here is almost the same description of the beastes, which Ezechiel hath in his fyrst and tenth chap. It is no doubt but that y^e holy ghost had respect therunto, that he might shew forth the selfe same thinge

Were 4. beastes full of eyes before and behinde. &c. Ezechiel vnderstode those 4. beastes which were shewed to him in the vision to be cherubins, that is Angelicall spirits, whose ministry God vseth in the gouernment of the worlde & all creatures, they are shewed vnder the forme of liuing beastes, y^e we maye vnderstande that the mouinge and workinge of all creatures both depend vpon the will of God, which worketh by the vertue of angels that we bee not seduced by the grosse erreure of the epicures

epicures, that we shoulde thinke God to be so shut vp in heauen that hee dothe nothing in earthe, when as neuerthelesse his prouidence is extended to the smallest thinges which hee hath created, which this figure of the beastes hath fittly expressed, when as they were full of eyes befoze and behinde, which notablie paint forth the cleare sighte of his prouidence most sharpe of all others. For as these beastes full of eyes, can see all thinges for the multitude of these eies, whether they bee before or behinde, or on either syde, about or beneath, neither can any thinge be hidde from there sighte, so the eye of Gods prouidence, filleth al places, for as God is euery where by his inestimable power, so also he seeth euerie where by his inscrutable prouidence.

Verf. 7. And the first beast was lyke a Lyon, the seconde
beast like a calfe, the thirde beast had a face as a man
and the fourthe beast was like a flyinge
Eagle. &c.

The formes and shapes of the foure beastes are set forth, that they might represent the Image of all creaturs which are conteyned in the foure partes of the world. And although in plantes, stones, metalles and in other suche like creatures, the power of God also worketh, yet it is lesse perceyued of the ignoraunt (to whose capacitie these thinges are framed) then in those thinges in which there is sence and motion, in which it is manifeste that God dothe moue them. Accordinge to that saying of S. Iohn the first Chap. In him was life. &c. But in that which doth pertayne to the perticuler forme of enerie one of these beastes, bycause the Lyon holdeth the chiefe place amonge wilde beastes, the ore is most profitable amonge the tame beastes, the man is ruler ouer all lininge creatures, the Eagle is called the chiefe of foules, vnder these foure shapes this vision doth comprehend all other lininge creatures.

Verf. 8. And the foure beastes had eche one of them sixe
winges aboute him. &c.

The winges do signifie the swiftnesse, wherewith these
Angelicall spirites, doe carie with metynailouse quicknes,
E. ij. the

reuelation of S. Iohn.

the power and will of GOD to all partes of the worlde. The number of the winges doth shew that Christ had respect to those thinges whiche Esay speaketh of the Seraphines, in the sixte chapter of his prophecie, whiche had two winges to couer there faces, two to couer there fete, and two wherewith they did flye. For when as the Cherubins and Seraphins also them selues, shall approche into the presence of Gods Maiestie, they couer there faces, as though they were not able to beholde so incomprehensible glorie, and they hide there fete as it were, acknowledginge there owne imperfection: finally, beinge wholly prepared to his obedience, they flye with two winges. How muche therefore is the arrogancie of hypocrites to be abhorred, which when they be altogether defiled & prophane, neither by any meanes framed to the obedience of God: yet they dare boldly steppe forth into his presence, neither do they feare least this impudencie of theirs should be corrected with thunder thzowen down from heauen vpon them.

And they were full of eyes within. &c. He sayed before that they were full of eyes on euerie syde, before and behinde, and now he repeteth that not onely without, but also within they were full of eyes, that he may stretch forth the prouidence of God, not onely to these thinges which are wrought openly and as it were in outwarde face, but that the force thereof doth reach euen vnto those thinges also which are within, although neuer so secrete and recond from the eyes of man, whiche thing we shall well vnderstand, if we shall diligently consider the generation, conseruation, forme, beautie, order, vertus and disposition, of all creatures.

And they ceased not day & night. The Angelicall spirites haue neuer any lesure to cease fro singing the praises of God, but they celebrate y same with perpetuall melodie. And truly the glory of god which is in all creatures, y verie dūbe stones do proclaime. And what other thing speake all things in general: then y the power & wisdom of god which made thē, is equale with his goodnes. which when it is done of thē without intermis

intermission or ceasinge. I greatly maruaile how it cometh to pas, that men for whose sake all other thinges were created, shoulde thinke, that they may alwaies leaue off from celebrating and publishinge the praises of God. But this truely doth exceede all monsters, that they which excelled al other liuing creatures vpon earth not only in excellencye of creation, but also exalted to the dignity of Aungelles, by the benefite of redemption, shoulde be so far from immitatinge the Aungels and other creatures in settinge forth the praises of God, that they may seme almoste to haue conspired with the deuills, that they may pull him oute of y^e throne of his maiesty. Hear but that I do reuerence the secret iudgement of God, which I do not vnderstand, I haue nothinge else wherewith to rid my selfe out.

Sayinge Holy, Holy, Holy, &c. This is the celebration of the diuine praises, that they attribut holines only to God, which except all creatures borrow of him, they are prophane and polluted. But as I suppose that this threfold repetition doth aboue the mystery of the trinite, so I thinke it is scarce mete to stisely to brge the same against heretiques, as the old fathers did. For the chiefe pointes of our religion ought to be proued with moze manifest testimonies, especially when we haue to do with those which are y^e enemies of our faith, to whom we be com laughing stocks, if sticking so fast in weake proofes, we may seme to haue lesse force to resist them. For it is like that the continuall and vnwearied studie of the Aungells is noted in this place, rather then the diuinite of the thre persons.

Lord God almighty. &c. They extoll the holynes, the omnipotence and eternitie of God, not only that he is such in him selfe, but because he is the vnsearcheable fountaine of al godnes out which enery god thinge doeth flowe into the Churche of euen holines, and the perfect fruition of eternall blessednes. We ought not to imagine a bare and idle almighty power of God about which y^e Sophonistes do vaineely contend, but which may suffice to execute in all thinges his moste holy will. For as oft as god is named almighty, it is for this cause, that our salety

reuelation of S. Iohn.

may be strengthened against temptations, that we maye not doubt at all, of the performinge of his promises, which is inducd with strength and power to bringe to pas whatsoeuer he hath decreed. But his eternall diuinity and godhed is therefore set forth, that we may learne to cleaue and sticke only to him, whereas all other things are inconstant and vncertaine, excepte they be susteyned and kepte from destruction, by his secret vertus and power.

Verse. 9. 10. And when these beastes gaue glozy, and honour, & thanks to him that sat on the throne which liueth for euer and euer, the
24. elders fell downe befoze him that sat on the throne
and worshipped him that liueth for euer more,
and cast there crownes befoze the
throne sayinge. &c.

If the Angels with all other creatures are inflamed with so greate seruentyne to singe forth the praises of God, that they neuer leaue of the study and care they haue to celebrate & same, what shoulde the Church doe, vpon which greater benefites of God are bestowed, then vpon any other creatures? ought it not to be wholly turned into thanks geuinge? when the Church therefore doeth acknowledge, especially the felowshippe of those which triumph in heauen: by comparinge them selues with the other creatures, how much she oweeth vnto god: She is ashamed that she should be most lackest of all things in celebratinge the praise of God. Therefore she doth prepare hir selfe to holy emulation, & whith how many moe benefits god hath adozned hir, so much more cherefully she proceedeth sozward, to the cotinuall celebrating of his glorie. For seing Iohn saith, when the beasts gaue glory to God, the elders do the same, (and he had said befoze that these beastes had no rest day nor nighte from this holy off. ce), he sheweth that the glozy of God is sounded forth of the elders with continuall & vniuersed study. But it is woorthy to be noted with what circumstances: the Apostell commendeth this ther diligence. First he sheweth that they fell vpo there faces befoze the throne of God, where by there humble submission is noted: that when they shoulde set forth the praises of God, they seme to aske pardon, because they can not thinke or speake any thinge

thing worthe his glorious maiesty. For so we ought to come to declare his praise, that we may acknowledge our selues far vnnete to suche an office. Awaye therfore with euery suche proude opinio of desert, wherby men be puffed vp as though they should deserue God, when they come forth to glorify his name, which if they vnderstoode howe unworthie they are to take so excellent a thinge vpon them, euen for this cause they would giue immortall praises to God, that he should vouchsafe them so great honour, as to suffer the to be publishers abroad of his glorie. Secondly they worship him whiche lieth for euer and euer. wherby they profite there obedience to be due vnto God, and there duetie bindeth that they shewe them selues, thankfull for so great benefites bestowed vpon them. Lastly they cast their crowns before the throne, by which signe they declare, y they wholly renounce all there owne dignitie, or which by anie meanes pertayneth vnto them, y they may render to God his due obedience. For we can not any other waye come into the presence of God to sing forth his praise, then if we spoile our selues of all our ornaments, that God may haue his perfect glorie alone. For all heyghe must fall down when we shall come into his presence, and it behoueth all thinges to appeare humble before his face. Moreover wee must note that not to Aungels, or Archangels, or to the blessed virgin, but to him alone which sitteth vpon the throne all glorie is to be ascribed.

Act. 11. Thou art worthe o Lord to receaue glory honour & power.

They do not sounde the praise of God with their lips onely or with there tongue as the maner of hypocrites is, but frō the bottome of ther harts they confesse as they haue tried, that all honour, glorie and power is to be ascribed onely to God, when they say thou art worthe o Lord. we are heare also admonished that no honour is dew to creatures whiche deserue none, but to God onely which is worthe thereof.

Because thou haste created all thinges, and for thy willes sake they are and haue bene created. &c. They shewe that all glorie is dewe vnto god for two causes, firste

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because hee hath created all thinges, by whiche right alsoe all creatures owe obediens to there maker. Secondly for the end of there creatiō, for all thinges were created for his will, and therefore ought to obey his will. This place teacheth, that the praises of God oughte to be celebrated, not onelye withe the tongue but with all actiones of our life, which ought to be framed vnto his obediens. where be then the merites of workes either of congruitie or condignitie (as they cal the) when as euen by the verie right of creatiō, all our seruice and obedience is heare affirmed to be dewe vnto God



¶ The fyfte Chapter.



After that vision was shewed vnto S. Iohn whereby was shewed the glorie of Goddes maiestie, that we might know from what foundatiō this prophecie was drawne, in the nexte place is taughte, by meanes of what mediatour, the knowledge of so secrete thinges could come vnto the Church. For the vision which is set forth in this Chapter doth teach, that it is onelye Christ which can open vnto men the secrete will of his father. For he is the onely doctor of his Church, whiche hath brought the truth vnto vs from heauen that is of so great distance from earth, whose voice also his heaucnly father hath commaunded vs to heare.

¶ Ier. 1. And I saw a booke in the right hande of him that satte vpon the throne wryten within and without sealed with seven seales. &c.

This

This booke conteyneth the whole will of God which is set forth to bee knowne of men, especiallye those decrees of his purpose which concerne, the disposition of his Church in this last age of the world, as it is manifest by the next chapter. whereby we vnderstand that there be some secretes of Gods will which bycause they are not cōtayned in this booke of his reuealed will, it is wickednesse for men to seake to know the. I will say moreouer they labour all in vaine to knowe thole thinges which God of purpose would haue to be hidd, wherefore heere must needes fall down a great portion of the scoole diuinitie, whiche is occuppyed in searchinge out those thinges onely, whiche God by no meanes hath vouchsafed to make knowne vnto mē. Moreouer we are admonished, that the decrees of God, concerning the gouerning of his Church, are so certayne, that they are registred in a booke, that we should not thinke that anie thing fallerth vpon the Church by fortune or chance, or beside the will of God. And whereas this booke is written within and withoute, it signifieth, that it conteyneth the narration of manie and diuers thinges, which coulde not be expessed in two or thre leaues, but scarsely be conteyned in a whole booke written all ouer. This booke is sealed with seauen seales, that is to say it is closed vp on euery side, so that although it be written both with in and without. Yet nothing can be red thereof before the seales be opened. For the number of seauen as we haue shewed before, signifieth fullnesse & perfection. Finally in that this booke is seene to be in the hande of him that sitteth vpon the throne, we are taught that the disclofing of Gods secretes, cannot be attayned vnto by mans witte excepte God him selfe teach the same to vs by his hand. when God therefore holdeth the booke in his righte hande, which afterward the lambe dothe open, hee signifieth, that the knowledge of all misteries, doth flowe frō him alone throught our Lord Iesus Christ.

Uers. 2. And I saw a mightie Angel, which preached with a loude voice, who is worthy to open the booke and lose the seales thereof. &c.

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That all the world mighte moze certeynly and manifestlye know, that Christ onely is the interpretour of the heauenslye will of God his father, a mightie aungell is sente forth, which with a lowde voice shoulde proclayme to all creatures in heauen and earth, if any haue any opinion of there own excellencie and dignity, whether they be worthy to open y^e booke and to loose the scales thereof.

Uers. 3. And none could neither in heauen, nor in earth nor vnder the earth open the booke neither looke thercon. &c.

Therewas not founde such worthines in any creature, that they could either open the booke or see any thing therein. And if the merites of no creature are so much worthie, as that they may attayne to y^e knowledge of Gods wille: how much lesse shall they be able to performe his commaundemente, and to purchase enerlasting life? That hee reherfeth the creatures that are in heauen, in earth, and vnder the earth, he doth it to amplifie the matter. For if heauenly creatures are vnworthy, much moze vnworthie are earthly creatures, or suche as are vnder the earth.

Uers. 4. And I wept verie much because none was found worthy to open the booke or to read the booke neither to looke thereon. &c.

Vven as Saincte Ihon knewe by inspiration of y^e holye ghost, that the knowledge of those thinges whiche were conteyned in that booke, was verie profitable and necessarie for the Church, and yet there was none, founde amonge Aungells or men whiche could make him partaker thereof, he burst out into weeping, and grienously complained that none was founde, whiche was worthy to open this booke or at the lest to looke vpon it. The godly affection of the Apostle towards the Church is here commended vnto vs, in that he testifieth by his weeping, what desire he had to promote the same vnto all necessarie knowledge, so that he wept so aboudantly because he thought for the time, that the knowledge of this booke had bene denied him. what shall we then say vnto those men, vnto whome when as the care of instructinge the Church is committed, yet thy followe there owne pleasure

pleasure, and are so farre of from being grieved at the ignorance of there flocke, & they the felues through there ydlenesse and thoughtfullnesse do nurish amonge them daime ignorance the mother of all mischiefe. And with what spirite shall wee say that the popish prelates are ledd, when they are grieved at nothing more, then if the Church of God obteyne knowledge of those thinges, which the goodnes of God hath appointed for her vse. This trulys is the spirite of Antichrist, that hee should forbidde those thinges to be knowne which the holpe ghost hath deliuered to that entente they should bee knowne. where as S. Iohn testifieth that he wept exceedingly, because those thinges were kept from the knowledge of the Church for a time that she might better vnderstande by whose benefite she obtayned the knowledge of them at the length.

Uers. 5. And one of the elders sayed vnto me weepe not. &c.

THe Lord suffered not his seruant to be long vexed for the want of that thing which by any meanes should be proffitable vnto him, but when he had first shewed & all other meanes did fayle, he bringeth forth our onely mediatur by whose meanes, that whereof S. Iohn did almost despayre should be performed. For they that thirst after & knowledge of good thinges (as he hath promised) shall at length be satisfied. wherefore one of the 24. elders is sente vnto him, to comforte him, declaring that one was now found, that should open the scales of the booke, reade it, and also make the Church partaker of it.

Weepe not. &c. As if he should saye, this vision was not therfore shewed thee, that thou shouldest vex thy mind thereby with immoderate sorrow. but this rather was the meaning of the holy ghost. to admonish the that this treasure is opened vnto the proffite of the Church by the benefite of Christ alone. Here let the Church learne worthily to esteeme the knowledge of these miseries, seeing it is purchased vnto her by no other meanes, but by the mediation of Christ alone.

Beholde the Lyon of the tribe of Iuda, the roote of David hath obteyned to open the booke, and to lose the seven scales there.

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les thereof &c. He reporteth a matter worthie bothe to be maruailed and also diligently considered, that onely Christ toke in hande and accomplished a worke of such difficultie which could be brought to passe by none other meanes. wherefore he calleth it his victorie not vnworthily, because none durst take y^e enterpryse in hande but he. But let vs here see with what commendations he setteth forth the vertue and power of Christ. First he calleth him a lyon of the tribe of Iuda, secondly the roote of Dauid and last of all the conqueror of so harde an enterpryse. That he calleth him the lyon of the tribe of Iuda, hee alludeth doubtesse, to the olde prophetic of the patriarche Iacob concerning his sonne Iuda: that hee should be as a lyon terrible to his enemies, so that euen when hee was a slepe no man durst awake him. Nowe what dignitie or prerogatiue so euer God gaue vnto that tribe, it is certayne it was for this onely ende, to set forth the glorie of Messias which should arise out of that tribe. wherefore the whole tribe was as a lyons whelpie terrible to their enemies, but especially Christ which was boine of that tribe, may chaleng this honour vnto him, that as a conquerour and triumpher ouer all his enemies, hee sitteth in heauen on high. He calleth him the roote of Dauid to shew that it is he whom the scriptures pronounceth to be the sonne of Dauid. I saye truly magnifieth a rodd that shoulde springe out of the drie stocke of Iay the father of Dauid, vpon which the spirite of vnderstanding, wisdom, counsell, prudence, and feare of the Lord, shall rest that worthely wee maye acknowledge that it is he, whome it behoueth onely to open these beauly misteries vnto vs. when he therefore with these commendations, setteth forth his fearfull power, and wonderful wisdom, he declareth that he onely is worthy, which shoulde obtayne the victorie of so harde a conquest.

Reuel. 6. Then I beheld and lo in the middelt of the throne, and of the 4. beasts and in the middelt of the elders, stood a lambe as though he had bene killed which had 7. hornes & 7. eyes which are the spirits of God sent into all the world. &c.

And when as one of the elders had spoken these thinges, by and by (saith he) I saw a lambe in the nuddest of the throne

as though hee had bene slaine whiche toke vpon him to open this booke, which lambe he sheweth by manye circumstances to haue signified Christ. First that he did appeare vnder þ shape of a lambe, whome Iohn Baptist magnifieth to be appointed of god the labe which shold take away the sinne of the world, by the sacrifice of his death. But it is meruail that he was shewed in the forme and shape of a lambe, whome one of the elders a litle before had sayed to be a Lyon. But thus wee must aunswere: that Christ is a lyon againste his enemies, and a lambe that hee mighte yelde that obedience to his father, by which he should deserue to be the redeemer of the world. Moreover, that this inuincible force and strength painted for the vnder the figure & shape of a lyon, neuer shewed it selfe for the more happely, then in the sacrifice of his deathe, by whiche hee most strongly subdued the deadly enemies of mankind, the deuill, death, sinne, and hell: Furthmore the lambe appeareth in the midst of the throne, that the equalle of the diuine glorie he hath with the father might be shewed. Away therefore with the cursed impietie of the heretiques, which prattleth þ Christ is not equall with the father, when as S. Iohn sawe him in the midst of the throne, and of the 4. beastes and 24. elders, by which figures the greatest maiestie & glorie of the mighty God is described. See semeth as though he had bene slaine, because by the price of his death, he obteyned this comparable dignitie to his manhod, that he might be worthe which should open the secrete misteries of Gods counsell to men. Besides this he hath seuen hornes and seuen eyes, by þ hornes no doubt is signified his full strength & power, for althoughe he shew him selfe meke and gentle, vnder the shape of a lambe, yet he hath might enough whereby he is able to breake and overcome, the force and strength of all his aduersaries. The misterie of the seuen eyes, S. Iohn him selfe expoundeth, to signifye seuen spirites, which are sent into the whole earth, that is the perfect wisdom of the holy ghost, by which Christ doth govern his Church which is spread ouer the face of the whole world. Let vs not feare therefore to become subject to Christ which

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which is indued with so great power, that nothing is able to resist him and moreover furnished with so wonderfull providence, that he guideth and disposeth al thinges, in all places to the safegard of his Church.

Act. 7. And he came and toke the booke out of the right hand of him that sat vpon the throne. &c.

Christ whiche is the lambe of God,aine from the beginning of the world, is found worthie alone, which shoulde open and read this booke. whiche when it was testified sufficiently by the voice of an Angell, he could haue rested & bene contente withe that praise whiche was granted to him of all thinges, if he were not rather desirouse of our helth and saluation, then of his owne glorie. Christ therefore came out of the bosome of his father and out of the middesse of the throne, an interpreter of Gods diuine will and pleasure, and for our instruction hath opened the booke whiche he tooke oute of the right hand of him that sat vpon the throne, which being opened he expoundeth it vnto vs.

Act. 8. And when he had taken the booke, the 4. beastes and 24. elders fell downe before the lambe hauing euery one harpes and golden vials full of odoures, which are the prayers of s. sanctis. &c.

With what thankfullnesse of minde we oughte to receiue this benefite of Christ, we are taught by the example of the beasts, of the elders, of the Angels & of all the creatures of God. So much more our vnthankefullnesse is to bee lothed, whiche when we are those to whose comoditie and health this whole benefite is referred, yet as though this thing did berie litle or nothing at all touche vs, we neither shew our selues thankful to the auctor of this benefite, neither doe greatly esteem the benefite it selfe. But it behoueth vs to consider, by what meanes they prepare them selues to sing forth the praises of God. They fall downe vpon their faces before the lambe, aswell the 24. elders as the 4. beastes, and doe offer vnto him diuine honour. For it is he whō all the angels of God, are commanded to worship. For no creature whiche is not God can take this honour, without great sacriledge, this labe of God therefore is God whome all the Angels doe worship. Moreover
by

by this gesture they testifie there modestie and submission, that they are no otherwise fit to set forth the praises of Christ, then if they acknowledge the selues altogether vnworthie of so great honour. They haue euery one harpes, whereby the consent and harmonie might be the greater, by which they shewe that all there strength, and the inwarde affections of there minde, doe agree with there tongue in celebrating and magnifying the praises of God. Forouer they haue golden vials full of odoures, which are the prayers of the saintes, as he him selfe expoundeth it. For the Church which is the congregation of the saintes, offereth to God a sweete smelling sacrifice, when she poureth oute vnto Christ, prayers, & supplications for the health of the whole bodie and euerie member of the same. For so the prophete of old time did sing in psal. 141. let my prayer be as an incense in thy sight, and the lifting vp of my handes as the euening sacrifice. And they haue these sweete odoures in golden vessels, that we may be admonished, that those prayers must procede out of a pure and sincere harte, which shalbe acceptable in the sight of Christ. Let vs offer vp therefore the incense of our prayers, out of golden vials, corrupted and defiled with no hypocrisie or wicked affection, so they shalbe for a sauour of sweetenesse to the Lord and his Christ. But that, certainly do here contende for the prayers of the saintes lining in earth are offered vp to God, either by the Angels, or by other saintes departed out of this life, it is more weake, then that it shold nede any long confutatio. For here the. 24. elders which are interpreted, the saintes, are sayed to offer to God not the prayers of others, but there owne, whereby is signified, that the intercessions of the whole Church are offered to God through our onely mediator Christ Iesus, for we sayed before that this felowship of the elders did signifie and represente the Church, partly warring in earth, and partly triumphing in heauen with Christ their Emperour.

Reuel. 9.

And they sing a new song saying. &c.

By singing they expresse there ioye and sinceritie of minde. Confessing that nothing can be more pleasaunt vnto them, then

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then for euer to magnifie & set forth the praises of Christ. And they sing a new song, the recording whereof continually, is neuer tedious or irksome vnto them. Although they shall sing it a thousand times, yet the newnes thereof doth alwaies please the, because they do celebrate & praises of Christ for euer without wearines. For as the benefite of Christ, is eternall, it so becometh that his glorie shold also be eternall. And like as by no age or continuance of time the excellencie of his goodnes is diminished, so the remembrance of his loue ought neuer to waxe old in the mindes of the godly. But alwayes they may thinke they haue new matter offered vnto them, to magnifie Christ, as ofte as they shall consider, that the profite and commoditie of his benefites shall neuer die. Which if it were taken of all men with that affection it ought: There shoulde not so manie be founde, which with full mouthes do boast them selues to be the disciples of Christ, to whom nothing is more tedious, and fuller of wearinesse, then to leaue off from there trifels and vaine pleasures a verie small time, to the settinge forth of the glorie of Christ.

Thou art worthy to take the booke and to open the scales thereof bycause thou wast killed. &c. This trulpe is the song, which with hart, minde and tongue they sing to the praise and commendation of Christ. That the lambe of God is worthie alone among all creatures, which should take & booke and open the scales thereof, which hath deserued to open vnto men the will of his heauenly father, which was tenenfold shut vp and hidde from the knowledge of mankinde. They shew why he is worthy, when they say he was slaine, for the obedience of Christ deserued so much, that it brought to vs (god being reconciled) health and saluation, to him selfe the dignitie of incomparable glorie.

And thou hast redeemed vs to God by thy blood out of euerie kindred, and tongue, and nation, and people. &c. The effecte of his death is described, that we which were the seruantes of sinne, guiltie of death, and bound slaues of the deuil, by his inestimable grace are deliuered from so great evils,

euils our pryce and ransome beinge paid, not gould oꝝ siluer
oꝝ any corruptible thinge, as Peter saith, but his owne pre-
cious blood, which hath washed vs from al vncleanes, and bryn-
geth vs forth into the presence of God clothed with new righte-
ousnes, not only chosen out of the tribe of Iuda, oꝝ out of the tri-
bes of Israel, but taken oute of euery kind, tongue, people &
nation, whereby the callinge of the gentles is plainly declared.

Verse. 10. And hast made vs king and priest to our God. &c.

WE are made of seruauntes kinges, that is partakers of the
heauenly kingdome by saith, of prophane and vncleane des-
pisers of God prestes, to offer by spirituall sacrifices to God.

And we shall raigne vpon the earth. &c. He signifieth that
we shall not haue a bare & empty name of a kinge, as we know
manye to chalenge to them selues the kingelike name, when as
they haue no gouernment oꝝ kingdome at all, he saith it shall
come to pas that the faithfull shall in very deede raigne ouer the
earth. yet this seemeth to be against reason, that they seme to say
that the kingdome of **C H R I S T** shalbe earthlyliche be-
cause flatlye denieth to be of this worlde, but we muste vnderstande
that vnder the figure of an earthly kingdome the heauenly
kingdome is described. And the faithfull are admonished, in the
meane time to beare all greifes patiently whiche they susteyne
for the professinge of the gospell, whereas shortlye after kinglike
dignity shall follow there miseries and calamities, which sought
to be vnto them in steed of great consolation and comfort. Let
vs learne here when it cometh to pas that we be oppressed wth
the cruell tyranny of sathan oꝝ his ministers, not to dispayre
but to lifte vp oure mindes to the moste blessed hope of the hea-
uenly kingdome. He is faithfull which hath promised, I euen
now this inheritance is purchased, if that we patiently waite for
the time appointed of God, when we shall enter into the same.

Verse. 11. And I saw and heard the voice of many angels about the
throne and about the beastes and the eldres, and there
were thousand thousandes. &c.

Saint Iohn doth diligently set forth this vision, that of all crea-
tures as many as are in heuē oꝝ in earth, Christ is acknowlen-

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ged to be worthe alone, which should be the interpreter of his fathers will, and declare & open to his Church, the mysteries of things to come. But it is obscure & darke which he saith, that he saw and heard the voice, when a voice is onely heard and not scene, but we must remember, that sighte is not to be referred to the voice, but the infinite multitude of Angells which compassed about the throne of God. Like as the glory of a king standeth in the multitude of people, so the maiestie of God is here described compassed about with an innumerable armie of blessed spirits, which are all most redely prepared to obey him, these also do reioyce with the Church for the grace of Christ, whome they extoll with worthe praise.

Verf. 12. Saying with a loude voice the lambe is worthe which was killed to receaue power and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glorie, and praise. &c.

Thouland thousandes of blessed spirits do witnesse with a loude voice, that Christ which by his death redeemed mankind from destructiō, is most worthe all the praise of power, riches, wisdom, strength, honour, glorie, & blessing. woulde God all those which professe & they seeke the glorie of Christ, would reueine this Angelicall confession, to ascribe all laude, honour, dignitie and thanks geuing, to him alone, which by his death hath bewitfied the power, riches, and wisdom of God about all the capacitie of men and Angels. The Angels therefore coulde satisfie them selues withe no multitude or heaping together of wordes, that they might worthely extoll his glorie.

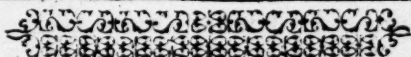
Verf. 13. And all the creatures which are in heauen, and on the earthe, vnder the earth and in the sea, and all that are in them heard I saying, praise and honour and glorie and power be vnto him that sitteth vpon the throne & vnto the lambe for euer moe. &c.

This may worthily be called a catholike confession, which all the creatures which are within the compasse of heauen do make, that to God onely and to Christ all blessing, honour, power, is dew for euer and euer. Moreover when the same thinges are attributed to Christ together with him that sitteth on the throne, who seeth not & they acknowledge Christ to be

to be eternall god? that he nameth creatures vnder the earth, he meaneth not soules in Purgatorie, neither the deuils of hell, but it is added for amplification and enlarging the matter, like as he numbeth all the creatures as it were by thre kindes, as befoze in the thirde verse, likewise in these wordes (and all thinges which are in them) when as he had rehersted befoze all thinges in heauen and earth and in the sea. But in that the dumbe creatures do also sounde forthe the praises of God, with what ardent zeale ought men endued with reason apply them selues to set forth the glorie of God.

Uers. 14. And the 4. beast sayed Amen, and the 24. elders fell downe and worshipped him that liueth for euermore. &c.

This godly and holy song, the 4. beastes which are Cherubine and Seraphin appointed of God for the preservation of his creatures, do sing Amen. The 24. elders which are the companie of the faithfull, falling prostrate, do worship him which liueth for euer and euer, with all submission of minde geuing to God onely by Christ all glorie, honour and thankesgeuing, for the health and saluation purchased vnto them.



¶ The syxte Chapter.



In the syxe first scales of the booke being opened by the labe, so many secrete misteries of Gods will are reuealed to the Church, the victorie of the Gospell, murder, famine, pestilence, & complaintes & consolatio of the martyres, and lastly an earthquake, which shoulde shake the whole worlde.

Uers. 1. And I saw when the lambe had opened one of the scales and

I heard one of the beastes say as it were thunder come & sec.

Whatsoever God hath decreed with him selfe, concerning the ordering and disposing of thinges in the world & prin-

cipally

capally

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cipally in the Church, the same is far remoued from the knowledge of men, excepte the lambe which is the son of God, vouchsafe to open the same vnto vs, which doth not onely reucale the secretes of thinges to come, but also he sheweth vnto vs the inuisible God himselic, John the 1. chap. After therfore that y lambe, to whome this office doeth onely belong as we haue learned in the former chap had opened one of the seals. John heard a voice vttered by one of the 4. beastes, as the voice of thunder whiche geueth him leue to beholde, this voice although it were vttered by one of the 4. beastes, yet it is known to bee the voice of God him self, whose seruant onely y Aungell was for it is not lawfull to anye creature to geue leue of him selfe eyther to approache neare or to beholde anye thinge in the diuine misteries of God: it was like thunder that it might wake and sterre by al his senses to attentatiō and diligent consideratiō, for we ought to shake of the drowsenes syled in mannes nature if we will come neare to the beholdinge of Gods misteries.

Verse 2. Therfore I behelde and loe there was a white horse and he that sat on him had a bow, and a crowne was geuen vnto him, and he went forth conqueringe that he might ouer come. &c.

The openinge of this firste scale, to the comforte of the godly describeth vnder the figure of a white horse, and of him that sat vpon him, the victorie of the Gospell spreade ouer the whole worlde. For the white horse signifieth the ministry of the gospel, ouer which Christ hath the rulinge euen as one that sitteth vpon an horse, by whose ayed, the heauenlye doctrine is caried with wonderfull swiftnes ouer the face of the whole earth, so that within few yeaeres after y ascension of Christ, y base & contible company of the Apostles, spreade abroad y doctrine of y gospel into all regions of the worlde. The whitenes of the horse describeth the ministry of the gospel to be most beutifull, suche as it is in it selfe not suche as it semeth vnto the worlde, for beutifull are the feet of them y brynge the glad tidinges of peace of them that declare good thinges. Joyfull and happy therfore is y comynge of this horse chiefly when he beareth such a one vpon his backe. For by him that sitteth vpon the horse, we muste vnderstande

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Christ him selfe, or els the doctrine of the gospell, which should be spread into al partes of y^e world, by the ministry of the word. He is armed with a bow, which sheweth far, and percerth depe, that he might signifie that his force should with swift course be sent forth into the uttermost borders of the earth, and enter euē vnto the depeest secretes of the heart. Lastly he hath a crowne geuen vnto him, whiche is a signe and token of the kingdome and victoꝝ which he shall get in the world, in spite of Sathan & all his ministers. Because the full tyme was come in which he that sat vpon the horse should shewe forth his strength, in deliuering the Church out of the iawes of sathan, he setteth forward and whether soeuer he goeth, he getteth the victoꝝ, neither is he sent forth of God to any other ende, then that he mighte gette a noble victoꝝ ouer Gods ennemies. This truly oughte to be a comfort, and as a spurre to the ministers of the gospell, that they should not faint vnder there burthen, neither by cowardlynes leue ther campe, if they were perswaded, that the doctrine which they preach, shall suerly get the victoꝝ, in spite of the deuill and all other ennemies. For in vaine doeth all the wickednes of the world labour to hinder his course, or to ouercome him, whome God him selfe hath purposely sent forth already crowned, not to a doubtfull battaile, but to a certaine victoꝝ. And this figure doeth represent the pꝛimitiue Church, & that fyrst age, in which the white horse cleare frō all spoites of peruerse & wicked opinions, caried y^e doctrine of y^e Gospell thzough the whole world.

Verse. 3. And when he had opened the seconde scale I heard the seconde beaste sayinge come and see. &c.

LCast we might suppose that all thinges should ioyfully goe forward accordinge to these happy beginnings, the opening of the seconde scale doeth shewe, that the doctrine of the gospell should be receiued with the wicked hatred and malice of sathan and the world. Touching that he is called to behold by the voire of the seconde beast, we maye learne to vse oure selues soberlye and modestly in searchinge oute the misteries of God, that we couet not to know moze, then the Lord doth vouchsafe to reuele vnto vs. Mozeouer that he might moze diligently consider all y^e

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seuerall of this vision, it behoueth that to euery one he shoulde be stirred vp with a new calle, for suche is the weakenes of our nature that except we be very often prouoked to meditate and consider those things which God hath reueled vnto vs, nothinge is more redy then that the same shold fall a slip out of our mindes,

¶ *¶* And there went oute another horse that was red, and power was geuen him that sat there on, to take peace from the earth, and that they shold kill one another, and there was geuen him a great sword.

*I*t is certainly sure that the gospell of it selfe is the doctrine of peace, not onely betwene God and men, but also to men among them selues. For what other thinge doth the gospel teach then that we shoulde rest by true faith in God our father, which is reueled vnto vs by the death of Christe, and that we shoulde embrace righteousnes and peace with men which are cure brethren. But it cometh to pas by y wickednes of men and y craftes of sathan, that whē this halson and peaceable doctrine is relected, men do cruellly rage among them selues, with murdering and slaughters, and god him selfe sendeth tumults and oppres of warre, that he may take vengeance vpon the wicked despisers of his worde, which is here plainly expessed vnder the figure of the red horse, and sathan sittinge vpon him. For the red horse doeth signifie the cruell and bloudy purpose of Sathan, by which he striveth euen at once vtterly to roote oute all the professors of the gospell, except his cruelty shoulde be bidded by the vchangeable decree and purpose of God. Whereof it cometh to pas, that the gospell beinge once preached, there arise horrible commotions, slaughters, and tumults. But Gods diuine prouidence doth so moderate all these things, that by these temptations he trieth his children, he suffereth his aduersaries to slea and murder one another. And this is it which John saith that power was geuen to this rider, to take peace from the earth, that men might rage and war cruell among them selues with killing and murdering: and for a token of the same power, he receiued a great sword. This is that sword, which Christ affirmeth he came into the world to send. This worthy to be noted y the deuill him self although

although he burne with cruell hatred against the godly, yet he can worke nothing against them, but so much as there mercifull father doth graunt. Also for the reuenge of the death of the godly, & the lord doth turne the sword of the enemies through there owne bowels. For we scarce reade at any time, & crueltie was vled against the godly, but & there bloude was reuenged, wth greater bloudshed of the persecutours. And this seemeth to be the figure of the Church, which Sathan assailed with open violence vnder the Romane emperours, euen to the time of Constantine the great, for in that space Sathan wrought innumerable slaughters of & holy martyrs vnder Domitian, Traian, Antoninus, Decius, Dioclesian, Maxentius, Licinius, & other cruell tyrants. But god throughly reuenged there death, when infinitie thousandes of them which became ministers of Sathans madnes in persecuting the Church were dayly consumed, either by forren warres, or ciuill seditiōs, & the Emperours also the selues, proconsuls, and gouernours of prouinces, by poisoning, by treasons, by tumults, and often times murdering them selues, did beare the due punishment of there crueltie. And yet his course was not hindered, nor his victoꝝ disgraced, which sitting vpon the white horse went forth that he might conquer & ouercome. But rather among these bloody swoꝝdes, & sore woundes, his victoꝝ appered much more gloriousse. **¶** And when he opened the third scale I heard the third beast saying come and see, then I beheld and lo a blacke horse and he that sat on him had balauces in his hand.

HE had nede of a new admonisher that he might diligentl^y print in his mind the misterie of the third scale. And it was on this sort, when men waxed werie of heauenly fooode, God sendeth hunger and famine among them, that they may suffer there deserued punishments for despicing his gospel. There appeareth therefore a blacke horse, carping the sorow & griefe of famine into the world, & they which will not acknowledg^e & happy victoꝝ of him & sat vpon the white horse going before, shold be miserably afflicted of the sturdy & cruell sitter vpon the black horse. This horseman carieth a paier of balace & he may deliuer to me for there sustenance bꝛed & water by weight, by which

reuelation of S. John.

we reade that the scarcitie of things, & famine is signified, as in *Leuit. 26. Ezechiel 4. and 5.* when the Lorde threateneth that ten women shall bake together in one oven, and shall deliuer forth bread by weight, and the Lord doth denounce by *Isaia* prophete, that the *Israelites* shall take for there sustenance bread and water, by weight and measure. But here he forgetteth not so muche the scarcitie of corne and victualles, as that wofull scarcitie and hunger of the worde of God, which *Amos* sayeth shall come vpon the world for the contempt of the same.

Uers. 6. And I heard a voice in the midst of the 4. beastes say: A measure of wheat for a peny, and three measures of barley for a peny, and oyl and wine hurt thou not. &c.

Least he should thinke this famine to be the most bitterest of all the plagues, he heareth an oracle out of the midst of the 4. beastes, that this punishment shall be tollerable, as that which should not bring vtter destruction. For he proclaymeth one measure called *Chenix* of wheate for a peny, and three of the same measures of barley for a peny, and that there shall be no scarcitie of wine and oyl. *Chenix* was a measure of wheat and barley, so much as should suffice a seruant, for one daies sustenance. The old interpreter dothe translate it two pounce, *Budeus* foure pounce, *Pollux* writeth that it weighth but thre pounce. *Ezechiel* in *Chap. 4.* doth allow for the sustenance of one man for a day twentie cycles, that is one pound of bread, and the sixt parte of a hin of water. And the *Romane* peny comed vnder *Domitia* was almost as much as 7. of our pence. And at that time they did work for a peny a day. when as therefore euery daies labour shold be spent for there bread-corne of wheat, he signifieth that the scarcitie should bee great, but yet such as might be borne, seeing there should be greater plentie of barley, and no scarcitie of wine and oyle. And this figure seemeth to represent the state of the Church, after it had taken roe in the world, but chiefly after the peace graunted thereto by *constantine* when as besydes the horrible heresies which did openlye defyle and corrupte the doctrine of *Christ*, many other traditions of men and vnpoffitable ceremonies crept in, by which a great famine of sincere and pure doctrine which

which is the spirituall meate of the soule, was brought into the Church, and yet not so great, but that there was sufficient of necessarie food, to the keeping of eternall life. For although they suffered the penurie of pure wheate bread, yet there was barley bread, which they might vse although not for so pure nourishment, yet for necessarie food. Notwithstanding in the meane time, there wanted not matter of spirituall ioye and gladnesse, (whiche is figured by the wine and oyle) to the godlye, which holding the onely foundation of there faith, whiche is Christ, haue obteyned remission of sinnes, peace and quietnesse of conscience, through the benefite of the same Christ.

Verf. 7. And when he had opened the fourth scale I heard the voice of the fourth beast say come and see. &c.

The fourth scale being opened, he is admonished by the voice of the fourth beast to come nerer and to behold the thing more certenlie and throughlye.

Verf. 8. And I looked and behold a pale horse and his name that sat on him was death, and hell followed after him, and power was geuen vnto him ouer the fourth parte of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger and with death, and with the beastes of the earth. &c.

This pale horse which carrieth death vpon his backe, signifieth the plague and other pestilient dyseases, whiche by the iust iudgemente of God doe slea men for the contempte of the Gospell. And after death followeth hell, that it should not be thought to be a pestilence of the bodies onely, but that with eternall death of the soule and tormentes of hell doe follow after. And truly hell alwaies followeth the death of the bodie, excepte in those onely, to whome the sting of death is broken, and the victorie of hell spoiled and taken awaye, by the deathe of Christ. And least it might be thought, that pestilence onely should deuoure the reprobare, he hereth that there was power giuen vnto him, to destroy the third parte of men with sword, famine, pestilence, and teeth of wilde beastes. with these 4. kinds of punishments God being angrie, doth strike, as Moyses witneseth in the 26. chap. of Leuit. whereby wee gather that the condition and state of those times shalbe verie miserable,

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this terrible threatening shalbe fulfilled. Suche as those times were when the empire of Rome was spoiled and wasted faire & wide by the Gothes, Hunnes, Vandalles, and other barbarous nations. For histories doe testifie, that there were neuer more manifeste examples of Gods vengeance, then in those miserable times, whe all places were filled with murderings, burninges, famishment, pestilence, and beastlye cruelties of barbarouse people. what mernail, if then the pure doctrine of Christ almost driuen out, and cōdemned in many places were silent, whereas befoze it florished wonderfully, if heresies, peruerse, and wicked opinions, and traditions of men did then receaue so great strength; when by the iust iudgement of God the mindes of men must be bewitched with lies and falschood, for neglecting the truth: if the Church smitten & shauen with the persecutions of pagans & heretiques was greatlye diminished and brought into a straight and narrow Rome? But against all these calamities & miseries the mindes of the faithfull ought to haue bene armed, that they shoulde not faint in such sturdie stormes of temptations, but holde and keepe an vndesiled and constante profession of there faith euen to the ende.

Act. 9. And when he had opened the first scale, I saw vnder the altar the soules of them that were killed for the worde of god: and for the testimonie which they
maynteyned. &c.

The opening of the fift scale declareth the state of the faithfull after they are departed this life. For when as they beinge oppressed with infinite calamities, were all the daye long as shepe apouined to the slaughter, this doubt mighte rise in the minds of the godly, what good or euill may come to them after death: when all there life they are intreated after a wretched manner, and afterwarde by the Barbarouse cruelty of there enemies they are deliuered vp & put to most bitter death. Christ taketh away this scruple or doubt, when as he sheweth, that those which were slaine for the worde of God, and the testimonie of the Gospell, which they alwaies boldly and frelye

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professed, do after this wretched life, inioye blessed tranquillitie in heauen, and do looke and waite for iust reuenge vppon there wicked enemies. And the soules of those that were departed out of this life are placed vnder the altar, that is, they rest vnder the defence of Christ, which is made to god, for them, the priest, altar and sacrifice, and they them selues also are offered vpon in earth by martiridome for a sacrifice of acceptable & sweete smell. Verie fitly therefore rest is assigned vnto them in heauen vnder the altar. But as concerning the place in which the spirites and soules of the saintes are placed, none other thing is here signified by the altar then that whiche in the 16. Chap. of S. Luke, is ment by the bosome of Abraham, and in the 23. Chapter by paradise.

Uers. 10. And they cried with a lowde voice saying how long tarieest thou Lord, holy and true to iudge and auenge our bloud on them that dwell on the earth. &c.

The blessed spirites wishe and desire that the glorie of God may be extolled aboue all thinges, they are here therefore brought in by a figure called prosopopeia taking it grenoussly that the iudgement of God was so longe deferred: that vengeance was not yet taken vpon the bloudy enemies of Christ & his Church. But it is not so much here expressed what kind of affection they are endued, as it is described, what there persecutions haue deserved. That we should not either imagine those to be lost which giue there lines for the glorie of Christ, or thinke that the wicked shall alwaies preuaill in there wickednes. They cry with a lowde voice, that they seme to be touched with an earnest desire of reuenge. How long o Lord. &c. They do not expostulate or quarell with God, as though hee were vnkinde vnto them, in that hee deferred there reuenge so long, but accordinge to the manner of the godlye they poure forth there complaintes into his bosome. For when they call him holpe and true, they signifie that hee neither can nor will suffer any thing, which is not in all pointes agreable to his righteousness and truerh. For it is not agreable to the iustice of God, that hee should alwaies suffer the iniuries done to the godly.

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godly to be vntreuged and it is contrarie to the truth of his worde, that wicked men should scape unpunished, of whome he hath promised so often that he will take due punishment vpon them for there wicked and heynouse offences.

Uers. 11. And long white garments were giuen to euerie one of them.

VVHite garmentes are signes of dignitie, wherewith Christ extolleth the soules of them, which haue not refused valiantly to suffer deathe for the testimonie of his Gospel. For although they do not as yet inioye the full and perfecte ioy of happines (suche as shalbe giuen them after the restoring of bothe bodie and soule) yet they liue & raigne with there head Christ in heauen, inioying happie and blessed tranquillitie, but yet so that they carefully vnder hope, do waite for the restoring of the bodies, and the time of the last iudgement. And this dignitie commeth vnto them onely by Christ, as we shall heare in y next chapte r folowing, of those that haue washed there garmentes in the bloude of the lambe.

And it was sayed vnto them that they should rest for a little season vntill the number of there fellowes and brethren and of them that should be killed as they were, were fulfilled. &c. They are commaunded to rest in this quietnes, and to beare patiently for a little time the deferring of the last iudgment, that the whole number of them whome God hath lykewise ordeyned to the gloze of martyzedome, should obtaine with them the same palme and praise of victorie, where by it is euidente, that althoughe almoste infinite thousande martyzes whiche suffered vnder those tenne famous persecutions, that yet there remainethe a great number of the godlye, whiche are referued and kept and shall suffer the like thinges, in the openinge of the sixt & seuenth scales. Forouer the time is called short, although it last many hundred yeares after, because the Lord hath appointed the ende and termes of the same, which if we haue respecte to the euertlasting comfort and consolation, ought to seme be ry short. For what equallity or propoztion is there of that which hath an ende, with that which is infinite? Neither are our sufferinges to be esteemed if they be compared to the glozethat shall follow

follow. Moreover we vnderstande by this place y^e can note pro-
mote o^r preferre them selues to the glo^ry of martyredome, but
he which is appointed and ordeyned of God fo^r the same worke.
Lastly we are sufficiently instructed by this vision, y^e the soules
of those that are departed do not slepe withoute any sence o^r se-
linge of happines, when with a loude voice they desire reuenge
they praise and magnifye God, are clothed in white garmentes
are commaunded to waite and abide fo^r the victo^ry of there fel-
lowes and byethen.

Apoc. 12. And I behelde when he opened the sixt seale, and loe there
was a great earth quake, and the sunne was blacke as
sackcloth made of heare, and the moone
warred euen as blood. &c.

THe openinge of the sixte seale setteth fo^rth a terrible earth
quake and also diuers wonderouse thinges of heauen. Christ
prophecied in the 24. chap. of Mathew, that there shalbe famine,
and pestilence and great earthquakes in many places al which
things, as also they are foretolde to come by this vision, so if they
be vnder stood without figure, as Christ himself testifieth, they
are onely the beginniges and as it were the foretellings of so-
rowes, and truly there cronicles are full of many great earth-
quakes in diuers and sundry nations and countries, which as I
graunte that they were sygnes of euilles shoulde followe, so
I doubt not but that by the earthquake here are fo^rshewed
great alterations and chaunges of empire and religion, which
shoulde follow almost th^rough the whole world. Suche as were
when the wicked pestilence of mahomet preuailed in the wo^rld
th^rough the saracines, and sodenly spread ouer the whole em-
pire of the east and at length the turkes succeedinge opp^ressed y^e
greatest part of the west also. Then truly Christ the sonne of
righteousnesse suffered a great eclipse, when the pure doctrine
of the gospell was darkened almost to all whiche seemed to bee
lyke sackcloth of heare to them, whose eyes the brightnes of
this wo^rld had so tied and bounde that they were blinde euen
in the cleare and broad dayly light. Fo^r Christ himselfe suffered
not any part of his owne glo^ry to be diminished: which was
such :

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euē then also the lighte of the worlde and the sonne of righteousness, to the faithfull although they were very few, but that he seemed to be so to the wicked multitude, when as most sharp and cruell persecution raging, verie few durst truly and boldly professe him. The moone that is the church which borroweth here light of the sunne, that is of Christ, is not onely (the sunne beinge darkened) deprived of his light, but also throughe the horrible slaughters & calamities is all ouer couered with bloudye colloure.

Uers. 13. And the starres of heauen fell vnto the earth euē as a figge tree casteth of her vntimely figges when she is shaken of a mighty winde. &c.

The doctors and teachers, which in the sincere doctrine of Christ seemed to shine as the starres in heauen, and other professors also, now overcome with calamities, and oppressed with miseries, doe fall downe to earthly thinges: they forsake Christ and his Church and embrace this presente worlde. And least they may seeme to be few which shall doe this, he sheweth that ther shall be innumerable, which no otherwise then vntimely figges do fall from the figge tree when it is shaken of a vehement and mighty winde, euē so together and as it were by one violent motion, many, & at length almost all, shall fall from the confession of the heauenly doctrine to the dyssolte and corruption of this worlde.

Uers. 14. And heauen departed a way as a scrole when it is rolled together and all mountaines and Isles were moued out of there places. &c.

The doctrine of Christ gospel being taken from among them which was wont to open heauen, the verie sighte also of the heauen it self is taken from the eyes of men. The similitude of the scrole rolled together doth expresse the sodaine taking awaye of the same. The mountaines also and the Isles which were wont to be refuges and places of safegard in such calamities, are not free them selues from the same terrible morralls, so that there appeareth no comfort at all to wretched and miserable men eyther in heauen or in earth.

And

Uers. 15. And the kinges of the earth and the great men, and the rich men, and the chiefe Captaines, and the mightie men, and euerie bonde man and euerie free man, hidde them selues in dennes and in rockes of the hilles. &c.

These proude despisers of the hollesome doctrine, which gaining them selues to riot, and vaine pleasures, haue neglected the true worship of God, whether they bee Kinges, or whether they be great men, rich men, or chiefe captaines, potentates or mightie men, with all there traine, both free and bound, shall now beare the punishment of these impietie, when as for feare of the euils hanginge ouer them, they shall fearefully hide them selues in the dennes and holes of the mountaynes.

Uers. 16. And they sayed to the hilles and rockes fall on vs and hide vs from the presence of him that sitteth on the throne and from the wrath of the lambe. &c.

Now they which hether to haue carelesly despised God, being pricked with the furies of there owne conscience, doe at length acknowledge these calamities to be sent vpon them from God being angrie. They do not so much feare death, which they desire to be vpon them for euer, but the sight of him that sitteth vpon the throne, and the wrath of the lambe, whiche is iudge both of the liuing and dead: what the are the tormentes of hell when the horroz and feare of iudgement is so great: and we may note that the wrath of the lambe whiche is so gentle to his friendes, is terrible to his enemies, although in time past he offered vpon him selfe to the Jewes to be slayne.

Uers. 17. For the great day of his wrath is come and who can endure it. &c.

Now they confesse that the time is come in which they shall be punished for there wickednesse, and that it can not be auoided, but that they must needs feele the seneritie and sharpnesse of the labe whiche no mortall creature is able to beare. Let vs therefore kisse the soule while he offereth himselfe vnto vs easy to bee pleased, that beinge free from these euils, we maye liue blessedly with him for euer.

¶ The

The seventh Chapter.



The blessed rest of the soules departed out of the bodie, is described before in the opening of the fyfte seale, that is the state of the triumphante Church in heauen, now is seemed conuenient, that it should bee declared in this Chapter, whiche doth perceyue to the opening of the sixte seale, what should be, the state and condition of the Church militant in earth. For the same being persecuted and kept out of the greatest affliction of all which here tofore hath happened and signed with the seale of the living God deliuered out of the calamities and miseries of this life, at length is taken vp with those that went before into the same degree and state of blessednesse.

Uers. 1.

¶ And after that. &c.

After this terrible earthquake, which altogether drawe away slouthfulnesse and dilacarie from the wicked Princes of the world and all the champions of Satrans garde whiche being greatly amazed with terrour of minde, they rather wished any kinde of death then that they would be drawne to the tribunall seat of the angrie Judge: Thon might meruail what should become of the Church of Christ. Wee is admonished therefore by this vision, that not one of the whole number of the faithfull whome God hath predestinate to eternall life can be brought from the constant confession of the true faith either by the cruell tormentes of the persecutours or by the subtille & pryncie deceites of heritiques, and false decepuers, although neuer so great stormes of persecutions fall vpon them.

I sawe foure Aungells stande on the foure corners of the earth holding the foure windes of the earth, that the voices should not blow on the earth neuer on the sea neither on any tree, &c. It pertayneth not greatlye to vs to knowe whether they were good or euill Angels, for God as it semeth god vnto him selfe executeth his iudgementes bothe by good and euill Angels. For A euill Aungell broughte in the plague in the time of king Dauid. A good Aungell also ouerthrew the armie Sennacherib with a mightie great slaughtre, Although

I doe incline to the Iudgment of those which contend that euill Angells are vnderstoode in this place. Wholseoeuer it be, it is thought good to the iust iudgment of God, to take alwaye almost altogether oute of the woꝛld, the free preachinge of the gospell, which befoze solounded in the whole earth. And the metaphoꝛe of the winde, doth very fitly agree: foꝛ the woꝛd being taken alwaye the foꝛce of the holy ghost, whiche sheweth him selfe foꝛth in the preachinge of the gospell, is restrained and holden backe, that he shoulde not blow vpon the earth noꝛ vpon the sea, neither vpon any tree. Foꝛ that whiche holosome and seasonable windes are to the woꝛld, the same is the holy ghoste, to the Church. The mistery of the woꝛd therfoꝛe beinge taken out of the woꝛld, the Church must nedes suffer a foꝛe decaye and deminishinge. And here no doubt is signified the greatestte defection and departing almost of the whole woꝛld, from the pure doctrine of the gospell, such as happened in those miserable times, when the pestilente doctrine of Mahomete inuaded all Asia and Affrica, the popishe doctꝛe dayly receiued great increase in Europe. And it is verpe lyke, that here is noted that generall Apostasie, whiche Saincte Paule foꝛesaw shoulde goe befoze the reuealinge of Antichrist 2. Thessal. 2. chap. which is plainely described in the openinge of the seventh scale.

Verse. 2. And I saw an other angell ascende from the rising of the sunne which had ̄ scale of the liuinge God, and he cried with a loud voice to ̄ 4. angels, to whom power was geuen to hurte the earth and the sea. &c.

I agree with them which vnderstand Christ to be signified by this angell, to whom those things, which are shewed to Iohn in ̄ vision, concerning this angell, do properly belonge. And it is so vsuall in the scriptures, that the angels doe beare oꝛ represent the person of there lord and head Christ, that I wil not tary in it. But as concerning this present place, ̄ which is here spoken, doeth truly agree to oure sauioꝛe Christ, that he ascended from the rising of the sunne, who Zacharie in his songe almost with the same woꝛdes magnifieth rising and springing from an hyge. Foꝛ he is the sunne of righteounes, befoze whose risinge

reuelation of S. Iohn.

as well in the greater world as in the lesse which is man, nothing is found but most thicke darckenes. He is sayed in this place to haue ascended from the rising of the sunne, that by his brightnes he mighte bring some comforte and consolation, to the godly, for we herd before y^e the sunne was darkened in the world, as though it had put on a sacke clothe of heare. But that is applied to the sight of the wicked & of hipocrites, for Christ ascending from the rising of the sunne to the Church his spouse, doth illuminate the same with the most pleasaunt & bright beames of his gloriose light. Furthermore Christ hath y^e holy seale of the liuing God, that is the euerliuing, & from whome all life doth flow, which sealeth with the holpe spirite all those whom the heauenly father the founteyne of life, hath elected & chosen to eternall saluation, and who he hath redeemed by his death, and restored, by his resurrection into newnes of life. Lastly with great auctoritie he restraineth the force of the 4. Angels, to whome it was graunted that they might hurt the earth and the sea, that they should not touch anye thinge at all vntill he had placed the seruantes of God in safetie. This place doth most clearly shew, that God doth neuer so grievously shew forth his wrath against the world, that he should caste away the care he hath ouer his Children.

Clerk. 3. Hurt ye not the earth, neither the sea, neither the trees, vntill we haue sealed the seruantes of our God in there foreheades. &c.

HE commaundeth them that they hurt not the earth, nor the see, nor the trees, before that he shal by the setting on of his seale destinguish and seuer the seruantes of God, from the wicked and hypocriticall. Here the punishmentes of the vngodly are deferred, while there is prouision made for the elect. The flood came not before Noah with his family had entered into the arcke. And the Angels witness that they can doe nothing to y^e cite of the Sodomites, except Lot were first brought forth into safetie. The angel spared the first borne of y^e Egyptians so long, vntill the postes of the Israelites were sprinkled with the blond of the paschal lambe, a little before night. And there is the like thing in the 9. Chapter of Ezechiel wher

as the sixe armed men were sente forth to destroye the citie of Iherusalem, they are commaunded to followe the man clothed with the linnen garment, hauing the inkehome of a scribe at his gyble, whiche God sent before to set a marke in y^e forehead of those, which did mooue for all the abominations which were committed in the citie. Those whome this first did not marke, he committerhe to the other to bee slaine. But they are signed in this place, not that they should be kepte free from pestilence or murder, but that beinge deliuered from eternall death, they might be knit & ioyned to God & Christ there deliuerer. And there are none signed besides the seruants of God. And this is also inoreouer to be noted, that they receyue the print of the scale in there foreheads, to this end, y^e as they are the seruantes of God, so they may also be knowne of all men to be such, neither that they should be ashamed, wheresocuer neede shall require, to confesse whose doctrine and religion they professe. And although they are signed in there harts by the holy ghost, yet the print & figure of the same scale appeareth in there foreheads, when as with the harte we beleue to righteousness, & with the mouth we confesse vnto saluation.

1 Ierl. 4. And I herd the number of them that were sealed, and there were sealed and hundred and foure and fortie thousande of all the tribes of the Children of Israel, &c.

The number of the electe is certeyne to God, so that one of them can not perishe whome Christ hath taken vnder his protection, for this foundation of God shall alwaies stande vnmouable, hauinge this scale: the Lorde knoweth who be his: and lette him departe awaye from vnrightheousnesse, whosoener nameth the name of the Lord. The number truly of the elect is great, and greater then men wold thinke. The elect in dede are not many if we compare them with the infinite mylions of the reprobate, but when a man woulde thinke that there remaine verie fewe and almoste no true worshippers of God at all, yet Christ hath his Church. There were seuen thousande that is manye thousandes of the Israelites, (when as Elias beleued hee was alone) whiche

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had neuer departed from God to the wicked worshipping of Baale. And whē we might thinke the nation of the Jewes almost taken out of the world, by the horrible persecutions and calamities, which chanced after the opening of the four scales: S. John heareth an hundred and foure and forty thousand of those that were signed of all the tribes of Israell. This nūber is cōposed of twelue thousand, twelue times repeated, the nūber of twelue signifieth þ gathering together oute of þ miscable disperſiō, into one body of Christ & his Church which was founded in 12. patriarchs, & afterward being foully disperſed, was gathered together by þ 12. Apostles, which were the preachers of Christ. And Christ wold signify the same thing by the Ieuery and two Disciples sente forth throughout the whole region, when this nūber of so many elders instituted by Moses, was counted famous among them, and it might plainely enoughe admonish the Jewes, that the Messias was come, which wold gather together again into one bodie, the wādering & straying Jewes and the Israelits disperſed ouer the whole world. we are taught here, that there remayneth a bodie of þ Church, to God, althoughe the members bee seperated one from another with neuer so long distance of place, so that they hold the holy bond of vnitie in Christ there head. For wheresoeuer the dead carcas is, thither will the Eagles be gathered. Matth 24.

Act. 5.

6. 7. 8.

Of the tribe of Iuda were sealed twelue thousand, of the tribe of Ruben were sealed twelue thousand. &c

He counteth it not enough to rehearse the whole number of those that were sealed, except he should also number out of every particular tribe, twelue thousande of those that were signed. whiche thing hee dothe for this cause, least any thinge of the promises of God, whiche yet remayned most famous and cleare, concerninge the restoring of the commune wealth of Israell, mighte seeme to faile. Not that it is necessarye that an equall number shoulde to bee taken oute of every tribe, but because the number of twelue, noteth perfection, and it sheweth that the number of the electe is determinate with God, likewise as the multitude of Souldiours is knowne to there Captayne, which that he may know the certayne number.

number of them the better and that order may be kepte, deni-
deth and distributeth his whole armie into ensignes or stan-
det des, which Christ doth here. Otherwise there is no diffe-
rence or prerogatiue of tribes in the first election. For the or-
der of the ensignes is otherwise distributed here, then of Mo-
ses in the 2. Chapter of the booke of Numbers although the
privilege of Iuda kepte, for the misterie of our redeemer and
head, for Christ came of the Jewes. But it causeth some to
meruaile, why the tribe of Dan shold be altogether omitted &
left out of this reherfall. The auncient writers supposed, by the
Prophecie of Iacobe that Antichrist shoulde bee borne of that
tribe, and therefore it was not to be reckened among the elect
tribes, which is to weake and vaine, and it brought forth mo-
strous fables concerning Antichrist, when as the wordes of
Iacobe sound no such matter Gene. 49. But onely, that like
as serpentes do set vpon men vnwares, so the nature of this
tribe shoulde be such that by subtilties and deuyces it shoulde
ouercome the enemies. The simplest and plainest cause, whye
one tribe was omitted, is this, that there might be place for the
tribe of Leuy, which was not to be left oute of that reherfall,
for the notable Misterie therein conteyned. For when as it
had no inheritance in Canaan the lande of promise (because
the lord was there portion) now the priesthood being translated
to Christ, the holy ghost would plainly expresse, that the tribe
of Leui also is admitted to the partaking of the heauenly in-
heritance, although that amonge the rest it had no part in the
earthly diuision, but of so great a number of Jewes which are
here reherfed we may gather that misterie which Dauid cou-
cheth in the 11. Chap. to the Rom. That blindness is partly
happened vnto the Jewes vntill the fulnesse of the gentils be
come in and then all Israel shalbe saued.

Uers. 9. And after this I behelde, and lo a great multitude which no
man could number, of all nations, kindred, people, and tongues. &c.

In the first place are numbered those that were signed of Is-
rael which is the first begotten of God, and after follow the
gentiles in their order, which as the Jewes are aboue them
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dignitie of time, so likewise they are aboue them in multitude and number. A great multitude, (saith he) which no man could number, but yet not of an vncerteyne number but whiche is knowne to God, and can not be comprehended of men, out of all nations, kindredes, people and tongues, God is no acceptor of persons but of euerie nation those that loue him, & work righteousnes, are accepted of him. For in Christ Iesus there is neither Jew, nor gentile, Scythian or Barbarian, but those whome God hath chosen he hath called, whome he hath called he hath sanctified, whome he hath sanctified, hee hath glorified. we se here what a wondrous great companie of the faithfull, by the meruitious counsell and prouidence of God bestowes all hope of man, is escaped out of so great waues of persecutions. And where as we thought the Church to be almost destroyed, yet great remnantes of the same to be preserved by the helpe of God. we maye learne here that the Church is not to be soughte with the bodie eyes, neither the multitude thereof to be measured by the Iudgemente of the senses. For if the Church should alwaies flourish in the eyes of men, there had bene no neede that the mindes of the godly should be confirmed by this vision, againste that temptation by whiche the whole Church should seeme to be utterly overthrowne, when all thinges appeared full of slaughters, heresies falshoodes, defectiōs, that sound rocke, which is promised shal stand against hell gates which was no where scene with mans eyes.

Standing before the throne and before the lambe, &c. They which before were aliens & strangers from the Church to whome there was no access open to God, now are citizens thereof, and the sonnes of God throughe the lambe, which taketh awaye not the sinnes of the Jewes onely, but of the whole world, so that they may boldly stand in the presence of God and of Christ, when as the wicked desired nothing more then to be hidde from the presence of him that sat vpon the throne, and from the wrath of the lambe, as we hearde in the Chapter going before.

Clothed with long white robes and palmes in there handes, &c.

des. &c. There aparell and decking eis here described, & they are clothed in long white garments, which are tokens of dignitie and innocencie that they beare palmes in there handes they testifie and declare that they are conquerers of the world the fleshe, and the deuill, but because he speaketh moze at large hereafter of there happinelle, lesse shall here suffice.

Uers. 10. And they cried with a loude voice saying saluation commeth of our God that sitteth vpon the throne and of the lambe. 3c.

There thankfullnesse is declared by the loudnes of there voice, that they cried out with loude voice, giuing wortheie honour to God. But this is chiefly to be obserued, that there is one voice of all those that be saved, that they referre all there saluation that they haue receyued, wholly to God and Christ. Saluation (say they) to him that sitteth vpon the throne of our God and to the lambe. These do attribute no parte of there saluation to there owne desertes, no part to workes of supererogation, no parte to creatures althoughe neuer so holpe, but they ascribe all the glozie of the same beinge restored to God and Christ, this is the Catholique doctrine of the Church, howsoeuer the Romane Antichrist condemneth it of heresye & cause not heard, and persecuteth the professores of the same with fire and sword, and exquisite tormentes both by sea and laude.

Uers. 11. And all the Angels stood round about the throne & about the elders and the 4. beastes, and they fell before the throne on there faces, and worshipped God saying, Amen &c

Although the whole roote of the papists abhorre and detest this doctrine as hereticall & Schismaticall, yet it hath for defenders euen infinite thousandes of Angels, whiche about the throne of the elders & the foure beastes, do diligently waite vpon the will and pleasure of God, as we haue learned in the 5. chap. these do alow with there consent, the triumphat song of the blessed spirits. For after they haue yeldd reuerence to God, with due submission, which they are wont before they dare bring forth any thing into his presence, first they testify there godlines in the approuing & alowinge the former song. saying Amen. Afterwarde that they maye satisfie there owne zeale, they expound the same sentence with many mo wordes.

reuelation of S. Iohn.

Uers. 12. Praise and glorie and wisdom and thanks, and honour and power and might, be vnto our God for euer more. Amen.

TO this ende belongeth this heaping together of woordes that they may testifie y by all meanes they ascribe all glory to God alone. Therefore they expresse the same thing with mo woordes all those are, praise and thanks geuing, honour and glorie, power & strength. For we can neuer attribute to muche to God in praises. And by this note or marcke we may discern the true doctrine of God from that which is counterfete & forged, for that doctrine which feareth to giue to much to god, as the popish doctrine doth, is altogether false and knoweth not the infinite greatness of God. For the papistes do flie and eschew this confession, that they shold ascribe all laude, glory, & praise, to God, least nothing should be left which they might attribute to S. Images, to there workes & other there profane toys and trifles.

Uers. 13. And one of the elders spake saying vnto me, what are these that are arrayed in long white robes? and whence came they?

Saincte Iohn doth meruaill secretly with him selfe at the number and glorious beaultie of those, which after the sealed Israelites taine forth before y throne. Yet he durst not aske whose they were modestly waiting whether that should be reuealed vnto him or not, by the permission of God. One of the elders therefore maketh aunswere not to the question but to y doubt of Iohn familiarly talking with him, and asking him, whether he knew well what they were, which were arrayed in long white garments and from whence they came.

Uers. 14. And I saye vnto him Lord thou knowest according to. &c.

[Don maketh aunswere according to his simplicitie, honorably (as the maner is of speaking to a noble personage) calling the elder Lord that he is ignorant, but yet hopeth that he shalbe instructed of him concerning the conditiõ of them, who he beleuech to know the same.

And he sayed vnto me these are they which came oute of great tribulation. &c. This elder declareth firste what they are & after ward whence they came. These are (sayth he) those which by the benefite of God are deliuered out of that horrible affliction

affliction which before was described should come. and now being free from all there laboures, they are receiued into blessed rest untill the day of resurrection, truly this someth wonderfull and strang, that out of so great an earthquake whiche did shake all partes of the worlde, such a number could be saued, but that we may confesse the meruailouse counsel of God to be farre aboue the capacitie of our witte.

And haue enlarged there long robes & haue made there long robes white in the blood of the lambe. &c. He setteth forth two notes of dignitie to be considered in there garments, the brydth and the colour, they ought to acknowledge, to haue receyued both of them by the benefite of Christ. Large garments are the appareill of noble personages & mightie men. This largenes they go in the blood of Christ, whiche hanged naked vpon the Crosse that he might bewtifully cloth vs. And they bozowed there white colour, (which is as we sayd before a token of dignitie and innocencie) of the red bloude of the lambe which though it alwaies continue red, and as it were euen new shed forth, yet it hath this meruailouse qualitie, that in washing awaie all spottes, it tourneth the purple colour of garments, into the whitenes of snow or wolfe, according to that in the 1. Chapter of Iesay if your sinnes shalbe as red as scarlet they shalbe made as white as wolfe, lastlye we muste note that all this whitenes is placed in there garments and not in there bodies, that we may acknowledge that they do not shine in there owne righteousnes, but that there vncleanes is couered with the innocencie of Christ, euen as with a large garment.

Uers. 15. And therefore they are before the throne of God. &c.

Not bycause they trust to there owne merites, but bycause beinge couered with the righteousnes of Christ they are beautifull to beholde, they dare come forth in to the presence of the throne of the immortall and euerliuing God. Truly the dignitie of this garment is meruailouse, bycause they do were it although they be priue of there owne infirmitie, yet they are not afrayed to come into the presence of y^e most iust iudge.

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And they serue him day and night in his temple. &c. God doeth accepte free seruice whiche are clothed with the innocency of Christ, without which ornament the seruice of none canne please him, but he will expell them oute of his familie as vagabondes, and runnagates, which doe thrust any seruice vpon him whiche they woulde haue to be accepted at his handes withoute Christ. But now there obedience is acceptable vnto him, so that they serue him in his temple as holy preistes day and night, that is so; euer, that they apply them selues to his holy worshippinge as though they had neuer bene prophane. We may learne here by what meanes we may offer vp in the Church reasonable seruice accepted of God, y is if be clothed of filthy garments of our flesh and hauinge put on the righteousness of Christe, we come sozth into his presence.

And he that sitteth on the throne will dwell amonge them. &c. It is not only accepted of God which his faithfull seruants doe, but he taketh vpon him the office of a mercifull and liberall lord, when he on the other side becommeth there patrone and defendoure, and as the hen couereth her chickens, so God will kepe his seruants free from the inuasions of all evils.

Reuel. 16. And they shall hunger no more neither thirst any more neither shall the sun light on them neither any heate. &c.

Although so longe as they followed the warfare of Christ in earth, often times they suffered hunger, often thirst, & parchinge heate of the sun and other such kinde of aduersities, now beinge made free and loosed from the bond of warfare, they feelee no more such calamities neither any discommodities at all and of y place some do not amisse that the fier of purgatory is here vtterly quenched, whē as this Angell pronounceth, that y god ly shall fele no kinde of burninge heat after this life.

Reuel. 17. For the lambe which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and shall leade the vnto the lvely fountaines of waters and god shall wipe awaye all teares from there eyes. &c.

This is a reueng of the cause, because the lambe which hath redeemed them sittinge in the midst of the throne equall to God his father, hath taken the care and charge of them, and shall

and shall leade them to the perpetuall fountaines of lining waters which being satisfied, they shall not thirst for ever, and God himselfe also will wipe awaye all teares from there eyes, when from henceforth there shall be no cause of sorrow and mourning offered vnto them, but they shall haue the fruition of perpetuall joy worlde without end. Amen.



¶ The eyght Chapter.



Here remaineth behinde as yet the openinge of the seventh scale which being opened there, are moze greiuous calamities, then as yet haue bene hard of to be sent forth into the worlde. When as the kinges moste terrible or rather the tyranny of antichriste is described.

Afterward his ruine is fore tolde and lastly the signes of Christ comining to iudgement do appeare.

Verse. 1. And when he had opened the seventh scale, there was silence in heauen about the space of halfe an hower, and I saw the seuen Angells standinge before God, and to them were geuen seuen trumpets. &c.

BEcause the greatestt matter that euer hapened, & mostt worthy due consideration, were made manifest in the openinge of the seventh scale, his mind was to be prepared to the diligent makinge of the same, with a rare & vnaccustomed manner. There is silence therefore made in heauen as it were for the space of halfe an hower in w^{ch} space whillett all thinges were silent, the Apostell shoulde serue by his minde to the diligent consideringe, what miserye shoulde be reuealed to the Church in the openinge of the seventh scale:

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scale, which he now saw opened. Moreover whē as his minde was holden in suspense half an hower in y^e waiting for of those things which should follow, he coule not but diligentlie print in his minde the things which so desirously he had waited for to know. But this silence may be also referred to the deliberation of God, for Princes and wise men are accustomed when as they will decree or pronounce any thing, concerning great matters and waightie affaires, to haue some silence in the meane time that they maye not seeme to haue done it, but with great deliberation not that the counsels of God are prolonged with doubtfull consultatiōs according to the manner of the counsels of men, but because he would prepare our minds to the diligent consideration of his workes and wordes, by suche signes as it were by aides: if therefore we will understand those things which are reuealed in the opening of this scale, let vs bring minds altogether, void of worldly troubles, and casting of the cares of all other things for a time, let vs giue our attendance onely to this, that we may diligently receyue those things which the holy ghost hath spoken. I know that this sylene is diuersly and farre otherwise expounded of others, & some do fly to vaine and vnprofitable speculations: But this interpretation whiche I haue broughte, as it is the playnest, so it seemed most conuenient and fit to the purpose.

Act. 2. And I saw seuen Angells which stood before God and to them were giuen seuen trumpets. &c.

ALl this preparation is set forth to expresse the greatnesse of the thinge, first there came forth the seuen Angells into the presence of god, they stād a certayne while as it were waiting what seruice god wold comaūde the, afterward there are deliuered into there handes seuen trumpetes, yet they doe not straitway sound the same, but they waite for the will of God in all thinges. All these do after a sorte pronosticate and foretell the heuynesse of Gods iudgements which should shortly after be made manifest. But the number seuen, of the Angels, as otherwhere so also heare, doth represent the whole fellowship of them, which are all continually most redely prepared, to
the

the obedience of god, although as it seemeth good to his infinite wisdom, he appointeth now these, now those to the executing of diuers busineses. But here the Angells are appointed to be trumpeters, which is because they are ordeyned to publish & iudgements of god in the world. For as it is the manner of kinges and Emperours and alwaies hath bene, to publish to the people there decrees, especially pertyninge to warres, with the sound of a trompet: so God hath described vnder a like figure the iudgements which he hath prepared against his enemies and despisers of his Gospell, when they are to be made manifest in there times. And the seuen trumpetes, do signifye all the reuelations of Gods iudgements, like as the number of seuen is vniuersall, and signifieth fulnesse in the writings of the prophets. when as therefore seuen Angels go forth with so many trumpets, there is ment, that all the kinds of punishments, which were included in the seuen scales, are to be repeated in this last scale. No meruail therefore, if our mindes with so great preparation, be stirred vp to diligent marking. Moreover if we shall gather the duetie of the doctours and teachers of the Church, by the Angells that sound the trumpets, we shall not doe contrarie to reason. And the analogie leadeth vs to the same, when as there office also is to be declarer of gods iudgments. For god hath not bene accustomed to send famousse plagues into the world, but first mē were admonished of the same by prophetes and teachers, that all pretence and cloke of ignorance might be taken from the wicked and if any be curable, they might repēt frō there errors, by which being seduced they wandred oute of the way, and so escape the euils hanging ouer them.

Act. 3. And an other Angell came and stood before the altare hauing a Golden censur. &c.

This Angell doth represent Christ, which is not an Angell by nature, but by office, and Malachie the prophete calleth him the Angel of the couenaint. For when as y most dangerous persecution of all, was at hand, vnder the tyrannye of Antichrist, which is reuealed in the opening of the seuen scales

Christ

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Christ commeth forth into the presence of God, beinge the head and preseruer of his Church, as one that would defende the same, against the dangers which were at hand. whereby both the greatnesse of the perilles is expresse, as though now necessarie required that the presence helpe of Christ shoulde be with them, and as it were to prouide them in doubtfull matters: and also the singuler loue of Christ towards his, and the especiall care he hath ouer them, which when troubles approche neare, is readie prepared and present to defend the before god, and by continuall intercessions to commend the cause of the Church to his fatherly mercy. And Christ is here brought in exercising the office of an highe priest, (which he hath without succession) when as he is placed at the altar. whereby wee can saue for euer those that come vnto God through him, liuinge alwaies for this ende, that he may make intercession for them. Hebrewes chap. 7. which is notably described vnder this figure. For he standeth at the altar, not that he may againe offer vp sacrifice propitiatory, because there is no oblation for the forgiveness of sinne without the shedding of blood. For this sacrifice being once finished, by which eternall redemption is obteyned, we neede not to haue it repeated. But when as he is entred into the holy of holiest that is into heauen, he offereth vp incense in the presence of God, which are the prayers of the saintes vpon the golden altare of the incense. For this figure doth allude to the custome of the priestes of the old law, which daily entring into the sanctuarie, did offer vp incense vpon the golden altar of incense. Exod. 30. which now the hailes & separations being taken away & the priesthoode translated to Christ onely, is remoued into the holy of holiest into which Christ him selfe hath once ascended.

And much odoures was giuen vnto him. &c. The continual prayers of the godly which they offer vp to god through Christ, are odoures or incense, as in the 5. chap. 1. vers. 8. And he saith much, because when affliction doth prouoke, the studie of praying is moze seruent in the faithfull, whiche when matters are quiet and pacified, is relected. And this is that pure incense

incense which Malachie in the 1. Chap. of his prophetic, fore-
tolde should be offerred vp through the whole earth euen from
the sunne rising to the setting thereof.

That he should offer with the prayers of all saintes vpon
the golden altar which is before the throne, &c. To this end
much incense, (which are the praiers of the saintes) is offerred
to Christ, & he might giue an incense of the vpon y golden altar
which is before the throne. That is, & by his intercessiō which
is the mediatur & aduocate of the Church, the prayers of the
saintes might deserue to be herd of the maiestie of God. This
place teacheth verie playnly, that we nede none other media-
tours of intercession with God, then this one Angel, which is
Christ, for he alone offereth vp to God & praiers of all saintes,
& promisseth that his father shall performe vnto vs, whatsoe-
uer we shall aske in his name. Moreover whē as none either
Angel or Saint, can chaleng this priestly office of Christ wout
great sacriledge: it foloweth & no Angell or Saint (this one
Angell of & couenāt being excepted) can offer vp incense vpon
the golden altare which is before the throne of God.

Uers. 4. And the smoke of the odours with the prayers of the Sain-
tes, went vp before God out of the Angells hand, &c.

The effecte of this oblation is declared, that the prayers of
the Saintes being offerred as incense by Christ, are a sacri-
fice of swete sinell in the presence of God. when as therefore
prayers are directed to God with linely and seruent faith in
Christ, they can not but be heard for Christs sake, which ma-
keth them acceptable to God.

Uers. 5. And the Angell toke the censur and filled it with
fire of the Altar and cast it into the earth, &c.

Christ promisseth that his father will geue the holy spiritte to
those y aske it importunately, which whē he also proceedeth
fro the sonne, after great perfume stirred vp in prayers of the
saintes, is sent downe into the earth, in the shape & likeness of
fier taken from the heauenly altar, whose fiery force, or if anye
thinge be more pearcinge then fire, is perceiued in the prea-
chinge of the woozde, in constancie of faith, in inuincible pa-
tience, and other Heauenlye giftes of his. And the great a-
bundance of the same spiritte is signified by the fillinge of the
censur.

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cenſer for in Iſay chap. 6. one of the Seraphins taking a burning cole with the tongues touched therewith the lippes of ꝑ prophete, that the vnworthines of his ſinnes beinge taken awaye, he mighte bee meete to declare the meſſage of God. But here the great golden cenſer, in which the prayers of the ſaintes are offered, is filled with fire, and is caſt into the Church, wandering as a ſtraunger in earth, according to that ſaying of Chriſt I came to ſende fire into the earth. Luke 12.

And there were voices and thunderinges, and lightnings and earthquake. &c. The holy ghoſt can not be in the world but that he will rebuke the ſame of ſinne, of righteouſnes, and of Iudgement, and then doe thoſe tumults ariſe, that heauen and earth ſeeme to be mingled together, but in the meane time it is well provided for the Church, that againſt the moſte grieuouſe perſecutions of Antichriſt hanging ouer her, ſhe beinge ſtrengthened with Gods ayde, ſhall not be ouerwhelmed with any raging tempeſtes of aduerſitie.

Ierſ. 6. And the ſeuē Angells hauing the ſeuē trumpetes prepared them ſelues to blow the trumpetes. &c.

After that provision was made for the ſafegarde of the Church, leaſt it ſhoulde faint vnder ſo great a burthen of euills, the ſeuē Angells do ſtraitway prepare themſelues to ſounde there trumpets, whereby we maye eaſelye gather, that they were ſtayed befoze, ſo long as Chriſt made interceſſion for the ſafetie of the Church, & with his giſtes might arme the faithfull to beare all aduerſities whatſoener. Whiche thinge althoughe he do continually, yet it was enough that it ſhoulde be ſhewed once in a viſion.

Ierſ. 7. So the firſt Angell blew the trumpet, and there was haile and fyre mingled with bloud, and they were caſt into the earth, and the thirde part of trees was burnt, and all greene graſſe was burnt. &c.

When as euerie one of Gods Iudgementes is reuealed, an Angell blowing a trumpet goeth befoze, and after ſolloweth the viſione which openeth the whole matter. The ſounding therefore of the trumpet is a ſigne that God will open ſome thing which oughte to bee receiued of men with due re=
ue=

nerence & attention. And he noteth by these figures the proceedings and increase of the tyrannie of Antichrist, which by the iust iudgement of God hee shall obrayne through the whole world. As S. Paul writeth in the 2. to the Thessal. 2. Chap. That they which receyued not the loue of the truth, that they might be saued, should be deceyued with lies that they might be damned. The like Allegories he vseth in the opening of the scales and will vse in the powring out of the vials Chap. 16. when he understandeth that the sentence of God doth pertain to the whole bodie of Antichrist and euery parte thereof; he reckeneth by therefore the earth, the planets, the sea, the fuds, the heauen, the ayer, and all thinges that are therein, that nothing may seeme to remaine whole or vntouched. These thinges therefore I haue forewarned, that we should not to curiously seeke subtile and curiose expositions in euery worde, when we understand that it is the manner of the prophete, and also often vsed in this vision, when as hee will describe any generall calamitie, to reherse all the partes of the world after this manner. There folowed (sayeth he) after the sounding of the trumpet of the first Angell, haile, which when it vseth to beate downe the frutes of the trees, and the corne of the earth, is wont to bring in great famine and scarcitie of corne & victuals. But here falleth not onely haile, but also flames of fire together therewith, & the bloud mingled with the same maketh the plague more horrible. For if the haile leaue any thing not cast downe, the fire consummeth it, or els the bloud corrupteth & rotteeth it, where vpon he sayeth, & the thirde parte of the trees & euery greene herbe was burned. It is declared in the sixte Chap. In the opening of the sixte scale, & there was giuen power to death to slay the fourth part of men, with sword, with famine, with pestilence, and with wilde Beastes: But here at the sounding of the Trumpettes, it is foresawed that the thirde part shall be afflicted. And there is signified onely the deare of victuals, as that A benix of wheate should be sold for a peny, bur here is described a metuailouse gret scarcity, when as euery greene herbe is burnt vp. where by it is

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gathered that these calamities should be greater then those, for the third part is greater then the fourth parte, and the scarcitie of victuals is more grieuouse then the scarcenes of þe same. Except perhaps he alludeth to the third parte of the world, because in Europe which is esteemed to be the third parte of the worlde, the tyrannie of Antichrist chiefly rageth, the wante of true and sincere doctrine, which through the traditions of men, and vnprofitable ceremonies, although not altogether wicked in the first institution, by long continuance of time was brought into the Church, whiles that the greater part of men was bent to defend the ordinances of the elders, rather then to keepe the commaundements of Christ him selfe. Here vpon it was necessarie that a most greuous famine should be brought into the Church. For þe soules of men excepte they be dayly fedd & nourished with the ieuice of Gods worde, waxe dry & wither enen like vnto those herbes vpon which blasting winde hath blowne, or which to much parching heate hath burned vp. we may also in this place not vnfruitfully vnderstande, diuers other plagues comming all together, as by the hail famine, by the fire pestilence, by the blood warre, as histories do testifie, that all these euills did vehemently rage in the world, in the beginning of the Romane tyrannie. But when as the two latter do immediately folow again, the former interpretation liketh me best: in the meane time I deny not but that the godly ought to be admonished by those bodely calamities, of what sorte that kingdome of Antichrist shold be, which with such vnluckie signes and tokens begonne to be spread abroad.

Mat. 24. And the second Trumpell blew: and as it were a great mountayne burning with fire was cast into the sea and the third part of the sea turned to blood. &c.

AT the sounding of the second trumpet which admonished that the second indgement of God should be made manifest, there seemed to fall into the sea as it were a mercuriall great mountayne burning with fire. A horrible sight no doubt and full of terrour, and truly there needed such a wonderfull signe to the describing of the kingdome of Antichrist, which followeth immediately after the want of spirituall food. For this
great

great mounteyne doth signifye the kingdome of Antichrist, as it is vsuall in the prophetes that kingdomes, and commune wealthes are signified by mountaynes, as in Ilay & Daniele. By the sea which is a gathering together of many waters, the holy ghost vnderstandeth in this booke, the infinite multitude of people deuided into diuers nations, kindreds and tongues. This whole mountayne burneth with deuouring fire, what soeuer shall come nexte to hand, for like as fire corrupteth and consumeth into ashes the matter which is put vnto it, euen so the pestilent mozen of Antichrist doth eate vp, rauē, and deuoure all thinges. And although it be cast into the sea, yet it is not quenched, but turneth the third parte of the sea into boiling bloud. And this plague is sent into the world of God in his wrath, because it wold not esteeme the most fruitfull mount Sion that is the kingdome of Christ. Therefore the worlde is compelled to beare the most sharpe and bitter tyrannie of Antichrist, which had refused to beare the most swete and pleasant yoke of Christ.

Wers. 9. And the third parte of the creatures which were in the sea died, the liuing thinges I meant, & the third part of shippes were destroyed.

When as the world stoboznly refused eternall life offered by Christ, it can not flie the most bitter death which by þ kingdome of Antichrist is brought vpo verie manie. And here may be obserued the quantitie, qualitie, & effect, of the Antichristian kingdome. The quantitie is noted, in that it is compared to a verie great mountaine, whiche is so muche the worse, as it is spread the broader, as when the papistes do bragge & boast that the borders of there dominio are stretched forth vnto the ends of the world, & of the firmamēt. The qualitie is described that like deuouringe fire it burneth, destroyeth, and wasteth all thinges, although those bawling hyerelings cry out neuer so loud, that without this mountayne there is no saluation. The effecte is declared, in that it turneth the third parte of the sea into bloud. And how much bloud he hath shedde by diuers kindes of torments, & especially by fire (þ we may omit the times that are past) our age that we now liue in doth see, & our owne

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eyes doe dayly testify the same vnto vs. Forerouer we will not declare what wares, and how cruell he hath stirred vp in the ages past. But in our age, what tumults he hath raised vp in France, in Germanie, in Spaine, and in Flanders, who is there thordw out all Europe which knoweth not? and in England, what he hath practised and wroughte euen this present yeare that we write these thinges, I would to God it were as ready to be auoyded, as it is easye to remember it. That rightly hee maye bee layed to haue destroyed the thirde parte of them that dwell in the sea, & the third part of shippes by which we may vnderstand townes or cities. But at length this fiery mountayne shalbe cast into the fiery lake, which all godly hartes do wish to be done most speedely.

Verf. 10. Then the thirde Angel blew, and there fell a great starre from heauen burning as it were a torch and it fell into the thirde parte of Waters and into fountaynes of waters. &c.

The third Angel sounding his trumpet, the Prince and head of this fiery mountayne fell from heauen in the likeness of a great starre burning as a torch. In tyme past the bishop of Rome shined in the heauen, bewtiful to beholde with the beames of beauculy doctrine, but after that he had by litle and litle degenerated into a strange and vsurped gouernement (of which defection the auncient writers complained more then a thousand yeares ago) he begun to fall from heauen towards the earth, till at the length, for the establishing of his pride and tyrannie, hee poisoned and infected all the pure doctrine with his owne inuentions, and so in the ende he fell into the thirde parte of the riuers and fountaynes.

Verf. 11. And the name of the starre is called Wormwood therfore the third part of the water was turned into Wormewood and many men died of the waters because they were made bitter. &c.

This Starre taketh his name of the effect, because with so great bitterness of his poiss, he infecteth the pleasant springes of pure doctrine, that he maketh the waters into whiche he shall fall deadly poison, so that as many as shall drinke thereof

therof excepte a speedy remedie against poison be taken shold perisly with euermlasting death. And the waters are called bitter which this starre doth poison. For accordinge to the sense and iudgement of the flesh, to which they seeme to haue the tast rather of hony then of wormewood. But to the spirite of god, which searcheth all thinges by his sharpe iudgement, this bitterness is found oute. which all the godly do safely acknowledge, which are drayned from the pestilente drinkeinge of this doctrine, that there is no tast of heavenly and spiritual sweetnes in poperie, but a mere butcherie of conscience, and all thinges most bitter, wher naye of them is but a little stirred vp & awakened out of the slepe of securitie (in which the most part of them are drowned) and pricked with the sense & feeling of their sinnes. wee may learne hence, that no drop of this bitter water, that is of the papistlicall doctrine, is to be mingled with the pure Gospell of Christ, least that it should tast of this pestilence and poisonfull bitterness.

Act. 17. And the fourth Iungell blew the trumpet, and the thirde parte of the sunne was smitten, & the third part of the moone, and the third part of the starres, so that the third parte of them was darkened, and the daye was smitten that the third parte of it could not shew, and the night likewise.

When as sound doctrine was corrupted with the pestilence deuises and inuentions of men, what could remaine sound in the Church? The third parte of the sunne, the moone, & the starres was smitten with thicke mist and darkenes, to those especially which dwell in this third part, in which kingdom of Antichrist bare all the sway. Deceit by the just iudgement of God, & soule ignorance, euen as it were a darcke cloud was sent into the eyes of those, which were willingly blind in the light of knowledge & vnderstanding. Whereof the third part of the day loseth the light, the sunne being darkened, the night also is darkened likewise in the third part, the moone and the starres losing their light, so that there appeareth no sparcke of the light to expell and drive away the darkenes. And to be short, a most thicke cloud of ignorance which rooke away a great parte of the heavenly light, couered the world. And doe wee merrall if

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the papistes glorie and boast that ignorance is the mother of
thers religion : seeing that this desherenelle wente before that
great and horrible defection which is afterwarde declared.

Mark. 13. And I beheld one herbe an Iungell flying through the mid-
dest of heauen, saying with a loude voice, wo, wo, wo, to the inhabi-
ters of the earth because of the sounde to come of 3 trum-
pets of the thre Iungles which were yet to blow. &c.

Although assuredly the iudgements of God are horrible,
which were herherto reuealed with the sound of the foure
trumpetes, yet there remaine much more greater & greuouser
behinde. whiche undoubtedly are so terrible, that it behoueth
vs to be stirred vp with a new admonition to the diligens con-
sideration of the same. Saincte Iohn therefore saw a certayne
Iungell flying in the midst of heauen, that he might aswell
be herd of the heauen, as of the earth, whome he herd with a
loude voice crying wo thre times, to the inhabitants of the
earthe, for the seuer sharpenes of those iudgements which
were yet to be reuealed at 3 sounding of the other thre trumpets.
Here receiue we were as dull as stones, the weight of Gods
iudgements wold haue away all knowlesse from vs, & stirre
vs vp to the reuerent receyvinge of the same, that beinge deli-
uered oute of so miserable calamities, we maye scrue him for
euer.

The nyenth Chapter.



Here is described in this Chapter, the
horrible confusion of the kingdome of Anti-
christ, which was established partly by fraud
& decies, & partly by violence, but all it came
to the byss, and then should be discovered by
the reuealing of the Gospell, and at length ve-
terly abolished by the coming of Christ.

Mark.

And the first Iungell blew and I saw the signe

which

which fell from heauen vnto the earth. &c.

When as the participle is of the time past, *πεπαιωτα* and *νομιστωτα* I vnderstande that it was the same starre whiche hadde fallen befoze into the riuers and founteynes. which had the name of wormewood giuen it, which we saye befoze doth signifie the head of this Church, which is the bishop of Rome. And if any man extend that it were not the same in number, yet I hold that it was the same in office, for although there haue bene many popes in number, yet they all make but one head of Antichrist, which hath rule ouer the mōstrous bodie of the Romane Church. Therefore albeit the Romane prelate shined in time past in the heauen such as a starre in the hand of the Lord, yet now being cast downe to the earth he hath lost all his shinninge beaūtie. It is ridiculous therefore that the pope doth bragge of the dignitie of his seate, to be such as it was acknowledged to haue bene of the old fathers in their time: & that he maketh mentio of the vertues of his predecessors, which were martyres of the primitive Church, all which doe pertayne no moze to him which is cast out of the heauenly seate vnto the earth, then if the deuil should boast of his principallitie which in time past he had among the Angels, out of which he hath long time bene expelled.

And to him was giue the key of the bottōlesse pit. &c. The pope which is Antichrist boasteth of the keyes of the kingdom of heauen in time past committed to Peter, & with great sacriledge he snatcheth and chalengereth them to him selfe onely, when as they pertayne and are common to all the ministers of Gods worde. But in verie deed saint Iohn playnly declarerh what kinde of key is giuen vnto him, that is the keye of the bottōmles pit of hell. That as power to open the heauen is giue to the godly teachers of the Church, so to Antichrist and his ministers, there is graunted powers to open the pit of hell. We may note here, that the power of the aduersary obteyneth rule in the world, not by chaunce or against the will of Christ, but by his will and pleasure, to take horrible and dreadfull vengeance vpon the prophane consumers of his woordes.

reuelation of S. Iohn.

Act. 1. And he opened the bottomlesse pit, and there arose the smoke of the pit as the smoke of a great furnace. &c.

A Richiſt doth not ſlackly and ſlowly ble the key committed vnto him, but the ſame being receiued, he ſtraytwaye openeth the bottomleſſe pit, which beſore was ſhut vp & locked. This place doth teach, y ſo lōg as the pure doctrine of the goſpell doth ſloſh and take ſorce, hell is ſhut, but after the ſame hath bene ſilenc, or infected and darkened with the prophan inuentions of men (as we haue ſhewed in the chapter goinge beſore) the moſte depe pit of hell is opened, out of whiche all kinde of euill doth breath forth. we ſee therefore, that not with out iuſt cauſe the Angell thundred out woes to the inhabitants of the earth, when as the pit of hell ſhould be opened to there hurt deſtruction.

And the ſunne and the ayer were darkened by reaſon of the ſmoke of the pit. Sec. The pit of hell being opened, two moſt curſed and abominable euils aſcend out of it, ignorance & error. For by the ſmoke which darkeneth the ayer and the ſunne, I vnderſtande ignorance: by the army of the locuſts, the teachers and defenders of errorrs. For that ignorance which beſore was ſpread onely ouer the third parte of heauen, now the ſmoke aſcendeth out of the pit of hell, the miſt dothe darken the whole ſunne and the ayer. And trulye howe groſſe and ſhamefull the ignorance of the former ages hath bene no man can be ignorant, which hath taſted and knowne the barbarouſenes of thoſe times, by there writings.

Act. 3. And there came out of the ſmoke locuſtes vpon the earth. &c.

They ſay that locuſtes are bred of corrupt ſmoke, whiche if we receiue for truth, it is found out, that ignorance is the mother of errorrs. Howſoener it be, that the locuſts go forth of the ſmoke, it is maniſeſt that the maſters and teachers of errorrs tooke occaſion by the ignorance of the people, to ſpread a broad there deuiliſh doctrine and wicked opinions. And like as the ſwarms of locuſtes verie often infeſte & vniſh whole regions, euen ſo the whole counties of theſe, do infeſte, corrupt, and deuoure all things. It is verie like that by the locuſtes

is signified all the rabblement of monie made priests, monks, and especially of begging fryers.

And vnto them was giuen power as the scorpions of the earth haue power. &c. Heretiques and maintainers of wicked opinions can not so to and fro abash these poison, but so farre as power is graunted vnto them, which is vpon those that perishe. And this power of theirs, which they haue to hurt is compared to the venomous poison of scorpions, which though it be of it selfe but a verie litle vermin, yet it hath power enough to kill a man. They picke and sting also secretly like scorpions, for they wind in them selues by private detraits, vntill they shall geue a deadlye stroke. To these the popish clergy is like in all thinges, but specially the begging fryers, which through a coloured shew of a vilose of humilitie, do seeme hile, yet secretly they thurst in the poisoned stings of there abominable errors, and so they slay men.

Uers. 4. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grasse of the earth: neither anye greene thing, neither any tree, but onely those men which had not the seale in there foreheads.

VVas herd before, that the four Angells were forbidden and stayed that they should, neither hurt the earth, the sea, nor the trees, before the seruantes of God were sealed in there foreheads, so likewise these scourges are forbidden to hurt the grasse, nor the greene herbes, nor the trees, but onely those men which were not signed with the seale of god in there foreheads. wherby we are admonished, that neither the illusions of Maſia nor the subtil sleighes of Antichrist haue anye force to seduce the elect, which like greene plantes being watered with the dewe of the heauenly doctrine, are preserved fro the locustes which burne by all thinges. Psalm. 1. There are reherced diuers kinds of plantes, as grasse, herbes, & trees that we may know, that all and euery one of the elect are diuyned out and deliuered from this plague: in which althoughe God worke diuersly, as in diuers kinds of plantes, yet there is one onely foundation, that God knoweth who are his.

Uers. 5. And to them was commanded, that they should not kill them
 E. 5. be,

An exposition upon the

but that they shold be bited five monthes, and that their possion shold be as the paine that cometh of a scorpion when he hath stong a man.

Plaie in the 28. Chapter of the eleuenth booke of the naturall historie writeth, that the pessilence of the venim of scorpions is importunate, but that with greater punishment, they slep with slow & lingering death, in thye daies space. Not without great cause therefore, the peruerse doctrine of the popes gard, is compared to the stinging of scorpions, which doth not by and by slep men by violent death, but tormenteth them a certeyn space with cruell tormentes, and at length taketh away eternall life. Of such sort are the persuations of the merites of workes, of satisfactions and the paynes of purgatorie, and of other such like trumperie, wherewith these locusts torment the miserable consciences, & which alone were herd in pulpits, in lectures, & in there shufles. when as in the meane while there was no mention, concerning the merits of Christ-free iustification by faith, eternall election, & other pointes of holome doctrine, which are taught in so many places of y^e holy scripture. There is limited vnto them a certeyne space of time in which there is, power to hurt, granted the, for five monthes, which is added for the comfort of the godly, that they may not feare that this plague shall alwayes increase, but the force thereof shall be spent, before halfe a yeares space be finished. But if we will more narrowly interpret this place, this infection shall abound in fure hundred yeares, but in the sixt age, which goeth before y^e latter end of y^e world, it shall decay, which we see hath come to pas in our age y^e almost euerie where y^e popish clergy is coneyned, yea euen with y^e verie papists, & at length without doubt it shall be utterly confounded & brought to nothing. **1** Cor. 6. Therefore in those dayes shall men seeke death, and shall not find it, & shall desire to die, and death shall flye from them. &c.

VVhen as we hearde before that those scorpions doe slep with slow death, it is no marvel if those y^e be stricken of them & tormented with cruell torments, desire to dye sooner then it is granted to them by the strength of the poison. By which sentence is expressed the greatnes of the torments, by which the papistes do slep the miserable consciences of me,
with

with there poisoned opinions, as he were both the sting of
scorpions: which when as they altogether leade from Christ
in whome alone all consolation of the godly minde doth con-
siste: there remaineth nothing vnto them besides the feare of
hell fire, and desperation full of horroure.

Act. 7. And the forme of the locusts was like unto horses prepared to
battail, & on there heades were as it were crownes, like unto gold &c.

Hereto he hath spoken of there poisoned strength & force,
now y^e we may knowe them the better, he notably painteth
the forth in there coloures. The forme (saith he) of there bo-
dies is like to horses prepared to battell, whereby y^e manner of
the popish clergie are clearly described, y^e like horses they runne
with swift course thorow all stages, & are alwaies most ready
die to battailles & strifes, if any man say against them by any
maner of meanes. They haue crownes vpon there heades, as
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Act. 8. And they had heare as the heare of women &c.

The delicate wantonnes & vnbibled lust of monkes & o-
ther of y^e popish clergie is noted, which can be compared to
no bounds of shamefastnes or lawes of nature, but that it will
breake them all. After wards there more then womanly desire
is reposed, and other whorish tricks, by which they would
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but that they shold be bared fine mouthes, and that their possib shold be as the paine that cometh of a scorpion when he hath stong a man.

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VVhen as we hearde before that those scorpions doe slep with slow death, it is no meruail if those that be stricken of them & tormenteth with cruell tormentes, desire to dye sooner then it is granted to them by the strenght of the poison. By which sentence is expressed the greatnes of the tormentes, by which the papistes do slep the miserable consciences of men, with

with there poisoned opinions, as to were both the sting of scorpions: which when as they altogether leade from earth in whome alone all consolation of the godly minde doth reside: there remaineth nothing vnto them besides the feare of hell fire, and desperation full of honour.

Uers. 7. And the forme of the locusts was like unto horses prepared to battail, & on there heades were as it were crownes, like unto gold.

Hereto he hath spoken of there poisoned strength & force, now y we may knowe them the better, he notably painteth the forth in their coloures. The forme (saith he) of there bodies is like to horses prepared to battell, whereby y manner of the popish clergie are clearly described, y like horses they runge with swift course thorow all things, & are alwaies most ready to battailles & strifes, if any man say against them by anye manner of meanes. They haue crownes vpon there heades, as it were of gold, because all of them, although they be most abjecte verities, do challenge vnto them selves a certain kinde of dignitie, & they would be had in price and estimation, neuer would they be subject to the small magistracie, wher as notwithstanding they are but vile locusts, wher as are noble neither by any vertue, learning or godlinesse, and profitabie for nothing, but so hurte. Yet at the will and pleasure of these men all things were gouerned in time past, when as the world honored them as kinges, and kinges them selves feared them, as those which by sighte and confession knew all there secrettes.

And there faces were as it had bene the faces of men. &c. They are not terrible to behold, but to keepe in the sight with the countenances of men, & allure men into there owne destruction, for they are mercuriall great flatterers, which for there lute and bellies sake, & that they may winne the fauour of mightie men, are not ashamed most filthily to flatter.

Uers. 8. And they had heare as the heare of women.

The delicate wantonnes & vnbubled lutes of monkes & nether of y popish clergie is noted, which can be contented to no bounds of shamefastnes or lawes of nature, but that it will breake them all. After wards there more shew womanly affect is reposed, and other whorish tricks, by which they would

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against men to thine dishonest love. For the world was never so blind that it would greatly esteem them; but that they bewitched the mindes of men with there whorish incitements as it were with charmed drinckes of love.

And there teeth were as the teeth of Lyons. &c. Although they looke smoothly with gentle and womanly countenance, yet they haue teethe like mermaydes. which for there hardnes and tawnyng are compared to the teeth of lions. For witnesses hereof let be the townes, howses, fieldes and Lordships, and moreover whatsoever the world hath which is gainfull, & serving to pleasure, all which these locustes haue grounde with there teeth, to serue for their meate. And to conclude there is nothing more ravenous then they, which although they be herie small in body, yet with the hardnes of there teeth, they deuoure whatsoever cometh next to their hand. In our countie of England they haue gotten the half almost, of all landes, and when it was ordeyned by the law, that there should no more landes of inheritance be deuoured into there handes, without the license of the prince, the poppish clergie call there lionish teeth with there owne possessions. And the monaches as the greatest commodities drew all the fairest benefices into their selues, the hurt of whole deuouring greedinesse, the church feelerh with this day, being depprived of good pastores for lacke of lining.

Uers. 9. And they had habbergions like to habbergions of Iron. &c.

They are defended with so great fauour and succour, as well of princes, bothe ecclesiasticall, and civil, that they seeme to haue breastes so harde that no weapon can pearce through them, and they dare boldly provoke all men to battail.

And the sound of there wings was like the sound of charrets when many horses runne vnto battail. &c. Although they haue the face of a man, yet they utter not a mans voice, but like locustes while they chiefly resemble, they make a horrible noise with there wings, even like the sound of chariots, which with many horses are drawne into battail. For they bellowe in there tempers, with a terrible sound, crying out but without understandinge. Sometime they utter great soundes in

pulpits

pulpers, but with out all reason, that woorthely they maye be saide not to speake with the mouthes of men, but to make a terrible noise with there winges.

Alc. 10. And they had tayles like vn to scorpions, & ther were stings in theretayles, and ther power was to hurt man fyue monethes. &c.

BEfore he compared there pestilent power of hurting to scorpions, but now when he doeth diligently recue all the partes of them, he sheweth that the locustes are armed also wth the tayles of scorpions, whereby they closely send forth there secret poison, and sodeynly when thou art not aware they thrust in there venommed stinges. Afterward he repeateth that power is graunted them to hurt for shorter time then they them selues woulde wishe, for they shall not infest or hurt the worlde aboue fyue monethes.

Alc. 11. And they haue a kinge ouer them which is the angell of the bottomelesse pit, whose name in hebrew is Abaddo and in grecke he is named Apollyon. &c.

THat we may vnderstande vnder what kinge this huge army of locustes doeth warre, he saith that the Angell of the bottomelesse pit is there kinge, which is sathan him selfe, and the pope is his vicare, whose name is geuen him in hebrewe and in greke of the great desyre and study he hath to destroy, for he is called in hebrew Abaddon, and in grecke Apollyon, which word in euanglisthe signifieth a destroyer.

Alc. 12. One wo is past, and behold two woos com after this. &c.

S. Iohn sheweth that this pestilence of the locustes is y^e first of those thre horrible indgm^{ts} of god, which y^e angell sayed to remayne, & it is in dede a terrible indgment of God that he suffereth so vile vermin by there venemouse and poisoned subtilties, to rule m^e as they list, euen to ther eternall destruction and yet ther follow two heuier indgements of God the^{se} this.

Alc. 13. Then the sixt angell blew the trumpet, and I heard a voice from y^e foure hornes of the golden altar wh^{ich} is before God. &c.

How much more grenous daungers were at hand, so much more greater attention, it was conuenient shoulde be moued, that y^e faithfull being admonished, might arme & prepare the^m selues against most bitter temptations. wh^{en} y^e sixt angell therfore sounded y^e trumpet which did foretel y^e most bitter & sharp periculis of al which shold come before y^e ende & consumatis of the

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the worlde, Iohn herd a voice from the foure hornes of þ golden altar which is befoze God. we spake befoze of the golden altar which signifieth Christ, which is offered vp to God for a swete smelling sacrifice, the force and effect of which sacrifice, bycause it remayneth for euer, an altar is alwaies placed in the presence of God. And the voice is vttered from the foure hornes of the altar, that is from the highest parte of the altar, that it might be knowen to be the voice of Christ which gouerneth the altar.

Reuel. 14. Saying to the sixte Angell which had the trumpet, looke the foure Angels, which are bound in the great riuer Euphrates. &c.

That voice soundeth to the sixte Angell whiche had sounded the trumpet, that like as he had bene a messenger to declare so great a plague, so he should be a minister of the furtherance of the same. Looseth he the foure Angells which are bound in the great riuer Euphrates. The foure Angells signifie þ whole power of the deuill, which he vttereth in Antichrist and his tyrannie, which should be spread into the foure quarters of the worlde. which neuertheles hath herther to bene restrained, that it should not burst forth into extream cruelty, but now the bridle is loosed to the same for a certayne time. At place no doubt, full of exceeding great consolation, by which we are taught, that Christ which is oure patrone and defendour, holdeth the deuils bounde bothe hand and foote, that they can not hurt the Church or moue persecution, but vpon his sufferance. But it seemeth obscure and darke, that he saith þ these wicked Angells are bound at the fludde Euphrates. of which there are sundry interpretations. But I whileste I wey all thinges, thinke that the place is assigned somewhat darkely, whiche shalbe afterwarde described moze pleynty, out of which this pestilence is powred in to the whole worlde. For Euphrates being takē without figure, is a riuer flowing round about Babylō, by which is ment Rome by a metaphor in this booke as shalbe shewed moze playnly afterwarde. This sence therefore I gather, that there was at Rome, which is the seate of An-

of Antichriste a great desire of wastinge and destroyinge the Church with fire and sword, neither were subtilties wanting, by which they might attempt there cursed worke: & moreouer that there were prepared all instruments of warre. But that this made rage was restrained and bydded from heauē, by Christ, that it should not shew forth it selfe to the world, before the time appointed of God.

Wers. 15 And the foure Angells were loosed which were prepared at an hower, at a day, and at a month, and at a yeare. &c.

Christ commaundeth when they are loosed, whatsoener they do, so farre forth as they execute the iust iudgement of God, is to be ascribed to Christ. They are sayed to be prepared, at an hower, at a daye. &c. whereby is expressed not onely the promptnes of there mind, by which they are inclined to hurt, but much rather & certayne time and euen the verie momentes thereof determined of God, in which they may rage after this manner. And he noterh a verie shorthe space to be graunted vnto them, that hee calleth it an hower, a day, a month and a yeare at the most.

To sleie the thirde parte of men. &c. Before, at the sounding the trumpet of the fyfte Angell, the locusts with the king Abaddon, by priuie practices and subtile deceites, slew a great part of men with the venim of there poisoned doctrine, by tormentes that endured long: but now with open violence and crueltie, to the wastinge and destroyng of mankind, these wicked and malignante spirites are sent forth with fire and sword to slea the thirde part of men. But how farre they were from negligence in exercising this power committed vnto the and what slaughters they haue made, all Europe oppressed with the tyrannie of the Bishop of Rome, hath felte to much in these latter times, and as yet is compelled to seele. And we know this tragedie was taken in hand & begon by the ayed and helpe of these wicked Angells, and as yet is continued by the same, although we now hope that the matter draweth neare to an ende.

Wers. 16. And the number of horsemen of warre were twentie thousand times ten thousand. For I heere the number of them. &c.

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NOW he teacheth with what meanes & instrumentes these destroyinge Angels are furnished, and also with what preparation to battaill, that they may make suche a slaughter of men in the world. Merely that the whole army is all of horsemen, wherby the strength and force of the preparatiō is signified to be the greater: That is to say, by so muche as an host of horsemen is more terrible, and more violent in warre, then an host of fotemen. Lastly commeth the number of there armye, which is almost infinite, twentie thousand times ten thousand which number S. Iohn playnly expresth that hee herde because it seemeth vncredible, that suche an army could be gathered out of the whole world, but by this huge armye are signified, not the host of one age, but of many. And this is y^e multitude of the Church of Rome, whiche is so often boasted of, whiche multitude is manifeste to be mustred into battaile against Christ & his church. But this great army shal easely be beaten backe and discomfited by him, whiche loosed out of prison and sent forth these Angels, whiche are the leaders of it, which he can call backe againe into prison, when it pleaseth him, and that wee trust he will doe now shortly after Antichrist hath bene so long reuealed.

Revel. 17. Thus I saw the horses in a vision and them that sat on them, hauinge fyer habergions, and of hyacinth and of hymsone. &c.

Sainte Iohn proceedeth in describinge the furnicure of the horsemen such as they were shewed to him in y^e vision. And the whole description of them is full of horrour and feare. For lest they might be thought to be naturall horses, or the horsemen after the common sort, hee declareth, that there was a farre other forme and shape both of the horses and also of the that sat upon them shewed vnto him in a vision. For the horsemen had fyer habergions, and of hyacinth and of hymsone, by which is ment that there breastes were so armed & fortified, against all violent force of weapons, y^e they neede not to feare any thing at all, yea whether soeuer they tourned the selues, they might shew forth before them nothing els, but fire smoke

smooke and brimstone, so I interpret the hyacinth or yelowe collour, so that which followeth in the next clause. For as the horsemen which ride on barded horses, are wont to weare collours or signes in there byeafts or there shields which might make the terrible to their enemies, so these soldiers of Antichrist shewing forth in there best flammie, smoky, & brimstone like colours they plainly make manifest to all men, what they threaten to the world in euery deed fyre & flame, that is, extreme destruction.

And the heades of the horses were as the heades of lyons & out of there mouthes went forth fire & smoke and brimstone. &c. The forme of the horses was monstrous & horrible, as which besides the swiftnes of horses, had also the heads & strength of lions, and yet which is above the fearfulness of lions, which teare onely with there teeth and clawes, out of there mouth, saith St. John, went fire and smoke & brimstone, and vnder these figures is described, the monstrous and barbarous tyranny of Antichrist, which with open violence defendeth the cursed seat of his pride, and cruelly warreth against all those, which shall but moue a finger against his presumptuous arrogancy.

Uers. 18. Of these three was the third part of men killed, that is of the fyre of the smoke and of the brimstone, which came out of there mouthes. &c.

HE signifieth that they shall be destroyed with most certeyn & present death, which by any meanes oppose themselves to his tyranny. For the fire speedily deuoureth, the smoke stranglet, & choke, & brimston both miserably torment those which it burneth neither can it be quenched if it shall once burne. Such shall be the rage & cruelty of antichrist, which he is not wont to tread vpon but utterly to consume with fyre, to blind the eyes with smooke, to take away the spirite, & to burne cruelly with fierie flaming brimstone, & with these three evils he slew the third part of men, by his warriors, horsemen of brimston, and lions like horses, that is by the princes which are subiect vnto him, & the furious common people which like horses carry vpon them the bondage and slavery of Antichrist and at the will and pleasure of there Lordes, do fill all thinges with smoke brimston and fierie flames.

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Mat. 19. For there power is in ther mouthes and in there tailles: for
there tailles were lyke vnto serpentis, and had heades
wherewith they hurte. &c.

Although certeyn copys haue not these wordes (and in ther
tailles) yet they seme to me by other examplars in whiche
they are found, y^e they shold be added, or at the least vnderstood:
For y^e sense is this, that this army doth hurt there aduersaries
with manifest violence, and as it were w^o open warre, and yet
not vnexpect or wanting fraude & deceipte, which was not per-
ceiued in y^e locusts, which seduced onely by subtilty & craft. But
these out of their blowy & cruel mouthes breathe out, smoke, fyre,
and byrnstone. But yet they want not their enginnes & snares,
because they haue tailles also like serpents, which tailles also haue
heades, which after y^e maner of serpents, priuily bite those which
are vncircumspect, yet they hurt more w^o there heads then with
there tailles, w^o violence the with deceipt, because many do knowe
there subtilties, but they canot beare there cruelty, therfore ey-
ther they are like wretches slaine, or els reuolt as cowards.

Mat. 20 And the remnant of the men which were not killed by these
plagues repented not of the workes of there hands, that they
should not worship deuills and Idols of golde and of
silver, and of brasse, and of ston and of wood
neither caⁿ see, neither heare nor goc. &c.

He teacheth that y^e wo^rld being corrected with these plagues
yet wold not be brought to a better mind, for those y^e remai-
ned vnkilled by these calamities, were stricken with no repen-
tance, for there heynouse offences that they might departe fro
there wicked workes. They sained some forow peradventure
so longe as euill oppressed them on euery side, but it was mere
hypocresy which they boasted. For so soone as the affliction cea-
sed, they returned to there kinde, and gaue them selues wholly
to there accustomed impieties. They honored deuils, they wo^r-
shipped idols, made of all kinde of matter and substance, and al-
though they were blinde, deaf and coulde not moue themselves,
yet they sought & hoped for health of them. And it is wo^rthy to
be noted, that the Apostle rehearseth all kinde of matter or sub-
stance

stance whereof idols were made: both that he mighte shewe the vanitie of men that they woulde seeke diuine nature in euery creature, rather then in God, and also that hee mighte declare that no kind of Idols are to be esteemed.

Uers. 21. Also they repented not of there murther, and of there fornication, neither of there fornication, nor of there theste. &c.

They can not keepe the commaundements of the seconde table, which dishonour God after such a sorte, as S. Paule sayeth to the Rom. 1. Chapter, therefore hee reprehendeth not onely there Idolatrie, but also there murders, forceries, thestes, and other such like abominable wickednes. And wee see by this prophetic that men tooke neuer the more heed for the plagues wherewith God afflicted the world chiesely for the tyrannie of Antichrist, which although manye of the Papistes them selues detest and abhorre, yet they forsake not his Idolatrous religion, neither departe from there wicked wayes.



¶ The tenth Chapter.



Here is described in this chap. what comfozte the Church shall haue in so great afflictions, when as Christ is brought in as patrone and defendoure of the same, which with the woꝛde of saluation, and his secret vertue and power will pꝛeserue the same safe & sound against all the violent assaults of sathan.

Uers. 1. And I saw another mighty Angell come downe from heauen. &c.

I behoued that the mundes of the faithfull, should be armed with some notable consolation against so sharpe and bitter
I. ii. temp-

reuelation of S. Iohn.

temptations least they should be altogether discouraged. For how could the feeble and weake multitude of the elect be able to suffer and indure so sturdy force as hard as the Adamant, of these hostemen, except they were furnished fro heauen with such rare and singular vertue, of the holy ghost: Christ therfore cometh forth euen in due time, in the shape and forme of an Angell as he doth often in this prophetic, because hee doth faithfully execute the will of his heauenly father in protecting and defending the Church, and he is described to be a farre other person from those former seuen Angells, which sounded the trumpets, as to be such an one as is armed not so much for the taking vengeance vpon the wicked, as appointed for the health and safegarde of the Church. For his wonderfull and mightie power is set forth, that the faithfull might not doubt to rest quietly and safely vnder the protectiō of him which is endued with innincible strength to breake and ouerthrow all the violent force of the aduersaries. Hee descended from heauen, that he might succoure the Church warring in earth, and eue now presently begining to fainte vnder þe burthen. For as often as we be oppressed with euils, heauen seemeth to be shut vnto vs, and through the weakenesse of mans nature we feare least the great distance of place shoulde separate vs from the defence of Christ. Now therefore Christ descended fro heaue, þe might bring present ayde to the afflicted & almost desperate estate of the Church. For he hath promised þe he wil be with vs euen to the end of the world. And although he ascended into heauen, þe might fill all things wth his maiestie, yet nothing letteth, but that he may be sayd to descend vnto the earth to ayde & succour the godly in there afflictions. So I say 64. desireth that the Lord would breake the heauens and come down into þe earth, the same doth Dauid ofte in ypsalms: whereby we playnly gather, that the descending of Christ into the earth doth minister matter of true and sound comfort to the faithfull. For God neuer forsaketh, nor leaueth destitute his Chyldren whome hee hath once taken vnder his tuition.

Clothed with a cloude. &c. He descended vnto the Earth clothed with a cloude, that is full of maiestie, for a cloud doth often times in the scripture represent to men a manifest signe and token of Gods deitie maiestie, so that sometime it is called the garments, sometime the chariote or hoise of God. And at length our saviour will come in the cloudes with wonderfull betwixt and glory, to iudge both y quick and the dead, that the faithfull maye learne boldly to contemne all the glitteringe shewe of gorgeousse apparell, as of purple robes scepters, and other princely ornaments, so often as it is bo- sted of to obscure and darken the glorie of Christ. For there is no such glory in the robes of any prince, as there is in Christ clothed with a bright cloude.

And the rainebow vpon his head. &c. He weareth a no- table ornament vpon his head, not a crowne of goulde, not a mitre garnished and set with the finest precious stones, but y rainebow, which is the old sacrament of the mercy of God to- wards mankind, wherby not onely the meruailousse geames of him is declared, whose head is sene compassed with y rain- bow, but also his infinite clemency and gentlenes, whiche be- inge begunne to be made manifest towards men from y crea- tion of the world continueth throughout al ages like it selfe. And herevpon he beareth that ancient token and signe of the conenantt y was made with the whole world, that we should not thinke that the whole church which is vpon earth, shal be overwelmed together with the stormes and waues of cares, griefes, and calamities, as oft as we se the heauen way darke and blacke with thicke mistye cloudes of miseries.

And his face was as the sunne. That which the sunne is to the world, the same is Christ to his church, which restoreth to the same the acceptable and glorious bewty of his light, wher the stormes & tempests of aduersities are driven away. Therefore in so great darkenes of the tyrannye of Antichrist, verely Christ the son of ryghteousnes ariseth in dew time to the faith- full, which being refreshed with the most pleasaunt bewty of his countenance, may well hope y the end of miseries whiche

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they wished is come. For by his vertue & power that bymston lyke smoke whiche is cast oute of the mouth of the monstrous beastes is scattered and vanissheth awaye, that it can not choke the remnants of the Church, as it doth the other worldly men.

And his secte were like pillers of fire. &c. From the head euen to the fete, Christ is described to be indued with inuincible power & strength. For he hath fete as it were pillers of fire, by which he will tread down & bring to nothing all the violence of y^e aduersaries. For he must sit so longe at y^e righte hand of God vntill all his enemies be made his foete skole. Therefore there remaineth a terrible end for the wicked, because they shalbe stamped to poulder with the fiery & pillarlike fete of Christ. What can A baddon the king of locusts do against this Angell, what can the twentie thousand times ten thousand hoysen do: what can those terrible hoyses do, which hauing heads like lyons doe by each out of there mouthes fire, smoke, & bymstone: what can the fiery, smoke & bymston like habbergions of y^e hoysen men do on ely the fete of the Angell which are like pillers of fire, shall easely tread down & ouerthrow all these preparatiōs & furniture.

Act. 1. And he had in his hand a litle booke open. &c.

This booke is an other (as I iudge) from that we had before sealed with seuen seales which conteyned the secreat iudgements of God, y^e were to be reuealed by Christ. But this booke seemeth to conteyne, those great consolations which are reherseed euerie where in the scriptures as oft as mentiō is made of God recoyled to vs by Christ, or y^e I may speake more briefly, the promises of the Gospell, with which it behoueth the mindes of the godly to be susteyned & holden by, y^e they may not faint, whe they are oppressed with euils, but may lifte vp theselues to the hope of eternall blessednes. And they are sayed to be comprehended in a smale booke, because they do not lead vs about by long & doubtfull circumstances, but bringeth vs directly to the throne of grace by one onely mediator Christ. They are writen in a booke, y^e they maye remaine throughout all ages, other wise it shold suffice to haue preached & uttered the only to y^e men of one age. This litle booke is opened, because the doctrine of the gospel

is

is offered to all, though it be receiued, but of a few: Therefore all excuse of ignorance is taken away, seeing that the booke is shewed open vnto vs. Moreover the faithfull haue in a readinesse wherew they may comfort one another, w^he no man forbiddeth to draw out of this open booke, & which may serue for there purpose. And Christ onely reacheth forth vnto vs these cōsolations, so that worthely the Aungell is sayed to hold the booke in his hand, whiche afterwarde he deliuered to Ihon which required it, to be eaten.

And he put his righte foote vpon the sea & his lefte foote vpon the earth. &c. His meruailouse greatnes is noted in that with the one fote he trode vpon the sea & with the other vpon the land. And also the largenesse of his kingdome is signified, that he possesseth all things both by sea, & by land. And reacheth vpon both the same elemēts euen as lord and ruler both of sea and land. And I thinke this is not to be passed by, that he put his righte foote (vpon which we stand more strongly) vpon the sea, & his lefte fote he set on the earth, for the waters are euen as stable and firme rockes to his fete, that the raging waues of the sea can not ouerwhelme and drowne them. There is no cause therefore that we shold feare, least any force of this deuillish army shoulde preuaile against him.

Act. 3. And he cried with a loude voice, as when a lyon roareth. &c.

HE which seemed a longe time to be dumbe, & as a Lion to sleap in his denne, whiles the tyrannie of Antichrist raged against the Church: Now hauing spied a cōuenient time to reuenge the cause of the faithfull, sodenly this Lion of the tribe of Iuda, as it were raised from sleap, roareth with a terrible voice against his enemies. and threatneth that he will plucke the pray euen out of there Jawes. And the similitude of a lion rozing is fely placed, whose voice doth strike a feare & terrour into all the wilde beastes. So when Christ shall once thunder after a terrible maner with his mightie word, all the pride of Antichrist must nedes tremble and quake. Although I do not thinke that he vsed an inarticulate voice, or & he filled the aier with a rude crye w^out vnderstanding, but that he thertned horrible vengeaunce to the wicked, w^h an imperious & angry voice.

I. iij.

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And when he had cried seuē thunders vttered there voices. &c. It appeareth that Christ with his loude criē called forth the seuen thunders, that they mighte make knowne to Ihon the seueritie and sharpenes of his iudgement against the wicked, for as soone as he had cried with a loude voice the seuen thunders vttered there voices. By the seuen thunders I vnderstand, all kind of most greuouse iudgements, which God shall thunder againste the wicked contemners of his diuine Maiestie, which are foretold that they are prepared, by seuen thunderinge, rather then speakinge Angels, least when wee measure the inuincible power of the armye of Antichrist with fleshy eyes, we should thinke that God were scarce able, to cast them downe out of so highe dignitie and power and that he wanteth waies and weanes whereby he may succour the most miserable state and condition of his Church.

Uers. 4. And when the seuen thunders had spoken there voices I was about to write, but I heard a voice from heauen saying vnto me, seale vp those thinges which the seuen thunders haue spoken, and write them not. &c.

Because Ihon beleued that those thinges which the seuen thunders had vttered, should be profitable to the Church, he would haue committed the same to writing, and set it forth with the rest as a parte of this prophēcie. But he herd a voice from heauen forbidding that he should write the same, but that he should shut vp and seale them, as sacred and holy mysteries which it was not lawfull for men to know. For God would not haue all thinges which he hath decreed to be knowne before they come to pas. So he commaunded Daniele to seale vp certayne thinges that they might not be spred among the people. Chap. 12. And Daule was taken vp into the third heauen and herd thinges whiche it was not lawfull to vtter. But some will say, wherefore then spake the seuen thunders the thinges which no man is graunted to hear? I aunswere, that they spake when Ihon herd them, that both his faith by the knowledg of the same, and also our faith by his testimony might be confirmed, when as wee know that God hath prepared all his iudgements, wherewith he will strike and
punish

punish the wicked, although it pertayne not to vs to knowe, what time, by what meanes, and by what minister he will execute the same.

Uers. 5. And the Aungell which I saw stand vpon the sea, and vpon the earth. &c.

After that the voices of the seuen thunders were sealed, whiche the holye ghost forbade to be vttered abroad: that most mightie Aungell whiche stood vpon the earth and the sea (least any thing should be wanting to the godly which might make to there full and perfecte consolacion) confirmed with a solempne othe that there calamitie should shortly be finished. For it hath great force to perswade to patience, if the faithfull knowe, that the hope of there deliuerance shall not long be differred. Howsoever therefore God would haue be-
rie many of his counsels kept close from men, yet he suffered this to be made manifest: and that the rewardes prepared for his souldiours should not longe be kept backe. But it is profitable moze diligently to consider the forme of the wordes.

Liste vp his hand to heauen. &c. It is certayne, that in as much as pertayneth to the forme of the vision, hee alludeth to those things which are written in the 12. Chapter of Daniel: although for an other end, for that the Aungell lifting vp both his handes to heauen sware, that after a time, two times, and halfe a time, the persecution of the Church should be ended, but here the Aungell affirmeth that there shall be no delay or tarrying at al, after the soundinge of the trumpet of the seuen the Aungell. And in that he sweareth with his hand stretched forth to heauen, he obserueth the solempne cerimonie, which the olde fathers vsed in swearing, whereby they signified that they called the God of heauen to witnes, and also to reuenge if they had sayled and broken there othe. So Abraham in the 14. Verse, made answer to the king of Sodoma, when he was earnestly requested to retaine the pray and spoile of the slaughter of the kinges, I haue liste by my hand (sayeth he) to God the possessor of heauen and earth. &c.

Uers. 6. And swars by him which liueth for euer moze. &c.

I. v.

This

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This is a circumlocutio of the mighty god, which lieth for euermore, by which kind of speech he is seperated, not onely from dead idols, but also from tyrants which are mortall, which would be worshipped them selues as gods, of whiche sort were Caligula, Nero, & Domitian. To whome also this doeth properly pertaine, because that by himselfe he lieth eternallye, and is the auctor of that lyfe, which is in all other thinges accordinge as S. Paule saith in the 17. of the Actes in him we liue, moue and haue our beinge. And it oughte not to trouble vs, that this Angell whiche beareth the person of Christ, listh to the auctorizty of God in swearing, when as he is God himselfe, seeing Christ himselfe doth the same thing very often in y person of the mediator. But rather the holy ghost would admonishe S. John that this decree concerninge the consumation of the worlde & the last iudgment, proceeded not from any creature, but euen from God himselfe. For we see how carelesly the worlde doth deride those thinges which are spokē in y holy scriptures concerning y dissoluciō of this frame of y worlde, & the faithfull are somtyme a slepe, when they geue the selues to much to pleasures, so that they forget y last iudgment whom it behoueth to be wakned with this sacred ppe of as Christ it were w a loude cryinge voice, that they may more diligently meditate of those thinges which pertainē to y reccyninge of oure redeemer from heauen.

Which created heauen and the thinges that are therein, and the earth and the things that are therein and the sea and the thinges that are therein. &c. The next thing y is ascribed to God, is that he is y creator of al thinges, & that he lieth not blessed to himselfe alone as y Epicures do dreame, but gouerneth all thinges which he hath created ether in heauen or earth by his diuine will & providence. For it is againste all reason when we shall ascribe y creation of all thinges to God, y we would take from him all rule & gouernment ouer y same. For it is necessarie y enerie worke serue to y will & pleasure of the workman. Whereouer he doth here solemnlye, and as it were with expressed wordes, as the custome is in matters of greate weight

weyght, number by all kindes of creatures, taking the diuision of places wherein they be. Which is done to amplify the matter, for though it be the verie same as if he should say (hee that hath created all thinges) yet we are moze diuine into admiration of so great power, wisdom, & goodnes, when wee here recited the heaue & all creatures which are therein, whether we vnderstand the Angelicall powers, or the starres, when we consider the earth & the infinite kindes of liuing creatures plants, stones, & mettals, which are in the same, when we behold moze diligently the great huge sea, & the innumerable formes and shapcs of liuing thinges which are ingendered in the same. And that he mentioneth these thre places onely, he doth it according to the vsuall maner of the holyc scriptures, because these thre commonly are most in sight to the common sort, and the holy ghost by his infinite mercy doth abase him selfe to the capacite of the rude and ignorant people. Although to say the truth, all creatures are conteyned in these thre places. For nothing is ingendred in the element of fire, and the scripture comprehendeth the higher regions of the ayer in which the meteo- res are made, vnder the name of heauen. so that they are also called the fowles of heauen which flye in the lowest parte of this ayer which compasseth vs about.

That time should be no more. &c. The grecke worde χρόνος signifieth the long delay of time. wherevpon it is sayed that χρονωσεν dothe signifie to delaye, or be slacke. For hee doth not vnderstand, as certayne do to subtiltie gather, y the mouing of the highest sphere of the heauen called Primum mobile, by which we measure time, shall then cease, but that from thence forth there shall be no stop, nor stay to deferre our redemption, nor no delay to take vengeance vpon y vngodly & reprobate: for they shall not then mocke the iudgemente of God, as they now carelesly deride that, which is foretold concerninge his seueritie and sharpenes.

Reuel. 7. But in y daies of y voice of y 7. Angel when he shal begin to blow.

HE sheweth how long the day of the last iudgement shalbe prologed, euen vntill the time in which the seuenth angel

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by the sounde of his trumpete shall giue manifeste signes of the resurrection, and iudgemente. Those thinges therefore which remayne to be made manifeste in the soundinge of the trumpet of the sixte Angell, are without all doubt to be referred to the last age of the world, which if we diligently consider, do clearly expresse and point oute the state and condition of this oure age, as we shall declare more at large in the Chapter folowing.

Euen the misterie of God shalbe finished. &c. The secrete counsell of God whiche is furthest remoned from the wisdom of the world, against which Sathan with all his wickednes of the world opposeth & secreteh him self, shall at length obtayne an ende. The gloriouse and perpetuall redemption of the whole Church through Christ. And the everlasting destruction of Antichrist, with his whole body: In either part vnspeakable glorie, and wonderfull magnificence of God shalbe scene. which thinges if they be not now seene of the wise men of this worlde, wee are admonished that it is the misterie of god, which is reuerently receyued of the simple and sincere faith of the godly, but is proudly reiected of the swollen and puffed vp knowledge of the vngodly, but in his due time it shalbe reucaled to the whole worlde, to the wicked for there reproche and condemnation, to the godly for there gloire and endlesse consolation.

As he declared to his seruants the prophets. &c. The holy ghoste did not here first beginne to admonishe men of the iudgement of God to come. but in tyme past in all ages he did the same by his seruants the prophets. For we cannot rightly vnderstande God, excepte we acknowledge him to be a rewarder of the good, and a taker of vengeance vpon the wicked, as the Apostell witnesseth in the 11. chapter to the Hebrewes. And this is also to be noted, that he useth the worde (of declaring the gospel) when he spekethe of his terrible iudgement of god, for that day is euen the perfect finishing and fulfilling of the gospel, in which the Lord shall performe what soeuer he hath promised. So Christ preacheth to his Apostles sayinge

saying when ye see all these thinges come to pas, liste by your heades for your redemption draweth nere. And trulye in that this seconde comynge of Christ semeth terrible vnto vs, it is for this cause that either wee abound in finnes and iniquities, in whiche alas, we doe to securelye fauoure and flatter our selues, or else that we are weake in fayth, which we ought to praye continually that God will increase in vs.

Act. 8. And the voice which I herde from heauen spake vnto me againe, and sayd, go and take the litle booke which is open in the hand of the Angell, which standeth vpon the sea and vpon the earth. &c.

NOW the heauenly voice doth teach to what ende Christ helde open the booke of the promises of the Gospell. Wercly that when it was deliuered by him to the ministers of the Church in the person of Ihon, and receyued of them, yea thoroughly digested in there breastes, it mighte afterwarde be spread abroade to the consolation and comfozte of the whole Church. (And the voice which I herde &c.) the same heauenly voice which commaundeth to kepe close the secrete mysteries of the seneu thunders, commaundeth him to take the litle booke of the Euangelicall truerth, which is open in the hande of the Angell. Let vs diligently therefore looks vpon this booke, which is committed vnto vs by the commaundement of the holye ghoste, but let vs not curiously searche after those thinges which the same spirite would haue to be kept secret. Moreover we may note, that the doctours, and teachers of the Church are commaunded (vnder the person of Ihon) to require the doctrine of the Gospell at y^e handes of Christ, which they are bound to deliuer forth pure vnto the Church, euen as they haue receyued it. Therefore the heauenly voice expressed by name, from the hand of which Angell he ought to receyue the same, not of eney one, but of his verely whiche standeth vpon the sea, and vpon the lande, whome S. Iohn knew well enough to represent our Loyde Christ. For if an angell from heauen shall bring any other Gospell, let that Angell be accursed. Galath. 1. Chap.

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Act. 9. And I went vnto the Aungell, and sayed to him giue me the litle booke, & he sayed vnto me take it and eate it, and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth as swete as honye. &c.

Saincte Ihon doth obey the holy ghost, (& as this thing was done in a vision) he goeth to the Aungell assigned him by the heauenly voice, and as he was commaunded hee requited the booke of him. And the Aungell doth not onely deliuer to him the litle booke, but also commaundeth Ihon to eate vp the same. Afterwarde he sheweth the force and working of the same, saying that in tast it would be as swete as honye, but it would fill his bellie with bitter iuice and such as could not be kepte in.

Act. 10. Then I toke the litle booke out of the Aungels hand and eate it vp, and it was in my mouth as swete as honye, but as soone as I had eaten it, my bellye was bitter. &c.

Ihon sheweth that he greedely deuoured the booke, which he receiued according to the commaundement of the Aungell, & that he found it to bee so in verie dede, whiche he had heard before concerning the force & working of the same. For as long as it was chewed in his mouth, he seemed to bee replenished with the most pleasaunt sweetenesse of honye, but after it had descended into his stomacke and intrailes, he felt more then the bitterness of galle. And this place alludeth to those things which are witten in the third chap. of Zecheiell, for there the prophete being commaunded to eate vp the booke which contained euen the seueritie and sharpenes of Gods vengeance, yet felt the swete tast of hony in eating the same, howe much more did S. Ihon eating a booke full of consolations, perceiue an heauenly tast: but y^e so swete meate doth make the belly bitter, it is for this cause, that he should not thinke that he had eate it vp for him selfe alone, whiche was to bee belched vp againe for the medicine of many. For both y^e Angel doth playnly shew this thinge in the next verse folowinge, and also the holy ghost doth other where, vse this same figure of the bellye being made bitter. As in the 4. Chapter of Ierem. the prophete complayneth that he felt the greivous tormentes of his bellye

bellye that was made bitter bycause he had herde the sounde of the trumpeter, and the voice of him that cried alarme. And in the 32. Chapter of Iob. Elihu boistereth that his belly is full of the holy ghost like to the vessel of the winnet which would burst except it be opened.

Uers. 11. And he sayed vnto me thou must prophetic againe amonge the people and nations, and tonges and so many kinges, &c.

HE teacheth that so great treasure of the heauenly doctrine was not committed to Iohn for him selfe alone, but that it was for this cause layed vp in his custodie, that as often as neede should require, it might be brought forth for the vse of the whole Church. And after he declareth how largely & fruite and commoditie of the same doth extend, when as the veritie and profite thereof must be spreade abroad, among nations and people, and tonges, and also many kinges. And there is described in this vision by a notable figure, a true pastour of & Church and faithfull minister, whome first of all it is meete to be raised vp by the holpe Ghoste to so highe an office, and callinge, and the same spirite leadinge him to receyue and take desirously the booke of the heauenly doctrine offered and reached forth to him of Christ, and when it is receyued, to lodge it in the inward bowelle of his breast, and last of all when it is well digested, to bring it forth to the profite and commoditie of manie, and to stirre vp Princes together with the people to the obedience of the same.



The eleuenth Chapter.



Sinct John goeth forthwarde in this chapter in describinge those thinges which remaine to be uttered in the soundinge of the trumpet of the first Angell, & in the end of this chap. vers. 15. he describeth the trumpet of the seventh Angell which is a messenger of the resurrection and last iudgement.

Act. 1.

There was given me a reede like to a rodde. &c.

Now it is declared vnder this figure, to what ende the Apostle is commaunded to utter forth the litle booke of the heavenly word, (which he had eaten) in prophesying diligently. Merely because ϕ Christ wil yet alwaies byld by his Church ϕ it should not utterly be destroyed, although it be greivously oppressed with the tyranny of Antichrist, threatening present destruction and utter ruine. But chiefly he signifieth that ϕ ruine of the same shall be repayed toward the ende of the world, eue as this figure pertaineth to the trumpet of the first Angell. For the measuring is referred to ϕ byldinge, like as in other places of the holy scriptures, Ezechiel 40. Zachar. where is the lyke metaphor.

And the Angell stood by, sayinge arise and meat the temple of God and the alter and the that worship therein. &c. Although in certeyne copies these wordes (and the Angell stood by) are not founde yet I doubt not but John vnderstandeth that this was the speech of that noble Angell Christ whiche he had described in the chapter going before. For Christ is the maister bylder of his Church. Vnder tohome all the ministers of the woode labour in preaching and spreadinge abroade of the gospel to the bylding by of the same holy temple. Therefore Christ commaundeth to measure the temple of God, the alter and those that worship in the temple: By which signe he teacheth that he wil haue a care, that the whole church, which is signified by the temple, that the true worship of God whiche is figured by the alter, & that all the parts & members of the Church, which are shadowed by those whiche worship in the temple, shall forthwith
be

be buylded vp and preserued in safety the which woulde all suddenly vanishe away, except by his ayed and defence, and by the ministration of the word, they shold be propped vp, euen as it were with pillars.

Verse. 2. But the court which is with out the temple cast out and meat it not for it is geuen vnto the gentils. &c.

Since the readinge of this place is doubtfull in the greeke books, for when some haue (without) & some (with in) we can a poynt nothing for certeynty, but that hauinge respect to the forme of the olde temple of the Iewes, which was deuided into three partes, I rather encline to that readinge, whiche hath (without) for there was no inner court that I know, but the holy and the holy of holiest. Although I leaue it indifferente whether way it is to be red. Yet this is certeyn y by this court, whether we read the (inner) or the (vtter) is signified the felowship and congregatio of hypocrits, which though they prouidly boast them selues in the glorious title of the Church, yet they are not comprehended in the bosoms of the true Church. But rather as bastardes and degenerate chyldren, they are refused, cast out and banished, and no other wise then the temple of the Iewes, by the Romaine gentils is destroyed in such sort y not on stone is left vpon an other: So these when they are banished & cut of from y people of God, shalbe gathered & ioyned to the prophane gentils, of whose number they are. Therefore least that S. Iohn might thinke that Christ comprehended vnder the name of the temple and those that worship there (in, all, as many as befall in an outwarde shew and vision of Christ and the Church, he flatly forbiddeth him to accompt that vtter courte, that is, heretiques and schismaticques, and all the other rablement of the secte of Antichrist, amonge those whome the Lord will receiue to be buylded vp into an holy temple, wherof he himselfe is y corner stone, he pulleth away y v: for therefore from y faces of the papistes and other heretiques which haue nothing els in their minds but the Church, the Church, when he commaundeth the to be cast so: th, as those that are neglected and despised.

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And the holy city they shall tread vnder foote two and forty monethes. &c. The wicked and prophane gentiles shall tread vnder foote, that is shall greiuously oppresse, persecute, and afflict the Church of God, for the full space of two and forty monethes, that is for that time which Christ doeth graunt vnto Antichrist to rage in cruelty against the godly. Some do count the number of monethes, from the first persecutions of y^e christians by the Romane emperoures, euen till the time of the emperoure Constantine which graunted peace, vnto the churches. But lette them whiche maintaine that opinion see howe certeyne it is. But to me it semeth moze playne that vnder nūbers the certeyne fixed, & deteminate time of the persecution of antichrist is assigned, whiche he cannot pas, although he fret fume and rage neuer so much. For the Lord hath counted the same time by monethes daies, & holwers. The reason of the numbers semeth to be of this sort, this time which sometime is called two and forty monethes, sometime a thousande two hundred & sixty daies, sometime a time two times and halfe a time, maketh in all, three yeares and an halfe, that is y^e one halfe of a propheticall weeke, which time also is called thye daies and an halfe. And this place alludeth to the weekes of yeares in the 9. Chapter of Daniell. Where vpon we gather to the great consolation of the Church, that a short time is appointed to Antichrist to wast the same, which is also shewed twise afterwar te in the 12. chap. and in the 10. y^e a short space of time is permitted to the deuill that he may strue with all his force to beat downe the Church, this interpretatiō as most simple and plaine pleaseth me best, those that seke moze subtiler may follow there owne iudgement.

Verse. 3. But I will geue power vnto my two witnesses and they shal prophesy a thousand two hundred and thyscore daies, &c.

After that the Lord, in the figure going befoze of measuring the temple, hath promised that he will buyde vp his church now hee the weth by whose industry and labour he will per-
forme

forme the same verelge with the ministerie of his woorde and by those ministers, whiche he will alwaies raise vp to him selfe for this worke, yea euen in the midst of the stormes of persecutions. He promisseth therefore that he will raise vp to him selfe two witnesses at the least, which the lawe requireth for the confirmation of euery cause, euen then when as the greatest multitude made droncke with the doting vanities of Antichrist, would refuse sounde doctrine. They commonly interpret the two witnesses to be Enoch, and Elias, when as we may rather by those things which follow in the sixte Verse gather that it is Moses and Elias. But it is absurd and against all reason to restraine to certayne persons those things, whiche are spoken of all the Ministers of the worde, which Christ hath promised that he will appoint euen in that perillous, and daungerous time, which are called two, not for the certayne number, but for the shewes sake. And yet he promisseth that he will furnish these with meeke and agreeable vertues, and giftes of grace, so that by the space of a thousande two hundred and sixtie dayes, they shall valiantly and boldly execute the office and ductie of prophetes, in teaching, reproofing and comforting. That is for the space of 24. moethes, whiles the holy cite is troden downe of the gentiles. He counteth the same time also by dayes, that we might not thinke that the Church should be depriued and want her teachers, euen the smallest space of time. For although to Antichrist and his blinde proctors, and adherentes the doctrine of the Gospell seemed to be buried, yet the Church had alwaies at the least two witnesses of Christ. Of which although y names of euery one, by reason of the iniurie of y time, haue not come vnto vs, yet histories do sufficiently witnesse that there haue alwaies bene some, as in England, wickliffe, in Italy, Marcellinus of Padua, in France the poye people of Lionse, in Germania Iohn Huss, and Hieron of Bohage and in other places diuers others.

Clothed in sackcloth &c. Perswading men by all meanes to repentance from Idolatrie and other workes of darkness:

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moreouer Christ doth take to this so honorable an office of being his witnesses, not golde popes, not purple Cardinals nor yet myrred byshops, but base men of the abject people, clothed in sackclothe whose dignitie is to be esteemed not by there apparel, which is very course, but by the office which is committed vnto them.

Wers. 4. These are 2. olyue trees & 2. candlesticks before the god of γ earth.

Because the worlde doth scornefully receyue those, which are sent of the Lord except being adozned wth outward pompe & glozie, they may drawe mens eyes vpon them, therefore Christ sheweth in how great price & estimation they are with him. They are sayeth he 2. olyue trees alwaies fresh flourishing & greene, such as Dauid glorieth γ he will be after he hath eschewed γ false accusatiō of Doeg, & alwaies dropping downe the oyle of hollesome doctrine vpon the Church, they are sayeth he, two candlestickes sustenting and holding vp the lighte of the Gospell in this darcke worlde, of what sort soeuer they seme to be earthly men, they are of this sort to God & the Lords of the earth & the whole worlde. The ministers of the Church may here be admonished of what sort they ought to be if they will be allowed of Christ as his witnesses.

Wers. 5. And if any man will hurte them, fire proceeded oute of their mouthes and deuoureth there enemies: for if any man would hurte them thus must he be killed, &c.

That the worlde might not scape unpunished in despisinge there simplicitie, the lord pronounceth that there worde against the reprobate shalbe like fire, which may burne them to ashes, & deliuer them to be burned wth infernall flames. For it is the sauour of death vnto death to those γ perish. In vaine therefore doth the pope commit the bodie of the Saintes to be burned wth corporall flames, seeing that he himselfe shalbe much more grieuously tormented for ener, wth there fiery spirite. This place doth teache wth what earnest zeal the godly preachers ought to burne wth all against the wicked enemies of the Church of Christ, & not to feare there crueltie, saying they haue in a readinesse the vengeance that is to be taken against all vngodlines.

Wers. 6. These haue power to shut the heauē, & it raine not in the dayes of

of there prophespye, and haue power ouer waters to turne them
into blood, and to smite the earth with all manner of
plagues, as oft as they will. &c.

IT is no doubt but that he alludeth to y^e hystory of Elias which
fore tolde of the thre yeares drought in the daies of Achab. 1
kings. 17. chap. like as also in the other part of y^e vers. to Moses
which stroke the land of Egypte wth diuers and sundry plagues,
as we may read in y^e 7. 8. 9. 10. chap. of Exod. By which figures
he signifieth, y^e his witnessess shalbe endewed wth the zeale of Mo-
ses and Elias, whose contempt the lord will reuenge wth moost
griuous punishments, as Egypt felt, as Israel felt, which es-
caped not unpunished fo; despising Moses and Elias: and the
popish Church daily feleth, the wrath & vengeance of God re-
nounced by these witnessess, to fall vpon them armed wth many
and sondrye plagues, and at length shall feele vtter destruction.
Furthermoze, to the great consolation of his Church and estab-
lishinge the authozity of his witnessess, Christ compareth the
to the most clear lights of the old Church, that y^e congregatio of
y^e faithfull may belcue, y^e Moses & Elias, are as it were returned
fro death and come vnto them, fo; the singuler giftes of mind &
spirituall graces of y^e holy ghost which God hath bestowed vpo
y^e same his witnessess. Hereof it is y^e we so highly honour y^e won-
derfull vertues of Luther & Caluine and others, that we thinke
them to be inferiour to none which haue liued since y^e Apostles
time, God graunt that we may be thankfull fo; so good giftes,
and that we may vse them well.

Act. 7 And when they haue finished there testimonie. &c.

The deuill can do nothing, Antichrist can do nothing against
the witnessess of God, so long as they haue not finished there
testimonie, that is not befoze they shall haue runne the course
prescribed them of God and shall fulfill the office and duty com-
mitted vnto them. They neede not therefore feare the madnes
of y^e persecutors, but belouy to geue testimony to christ & his gos-
pell, so lōg as it semeth good to y^e Lord, & at length whē they haue
discharged there duty to permit theselues to his wil & pleasure.

The beastes that commeth out of the bottomeles pit shall

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make warre against them, and shall ouercome them and kyll them. &c. The cruell and vnrasonable beast Antichrist, which shall come forth of hell to establishe the kingdome of the deuill which is inferiour to them in spirituall battaile, yet their superiour in carnall warre, shall oppresse, ouercome, and slea the holy Partyzes of God.

Verse 8. And there corpses shall lye in the streetes of the great cite. &c.

Antichrist puffed vp with so greates a victorie, shall triumphe ouer their dead bodies with barbarous cruelty, the streetes of the greates cite shall be scattered with there slaine members. Euery where through oute the whole dominion of Antichrist, howe wide and large so euer it be, shall be seene, the dead bodies of the saintes, which thinge how true it is, the history of the former times and experience of oure owne age, doth sufficiently, teache.

Which spirituallie is called Sodom and Egipte where oure Lord also was crucified. &c. He sheweth which is that great cite, the see of Antichrist, which falsely bostrerth her selfe to be the holy cite Jerusalem, that is the Church of god, when as yet for there cursed wickednes and filthy abomination it rather deserueth to be called Sodom, and for the persecution and bondage which it laierth vpon the saintes, to be named Egipt, neither doth it resemble Jerusalem in any thinge, except in cruelty against the godly which as it killed all the prophets, so likewise it slew christ himselfe the head of the Church with a shamefull death. And here he dooth plainely euen as it were poynted at the sea of Rome with the finger, when as hee calleth it the greates cite in which our Lorde was crucified. For Hierusalem of the Iewes, deserued not by any reason to be called the greates cite, muche lesse when Iohn receiued this vision, when as it was utterly raised of the Romaines and made euen with the ground. But seinge that the holy ghost doeth after warde manifestlye by the greates cite interpret Rome, it is certeyn the same cite is also vnderstode in this place. And it fitly agreeth, that the Romaine tyranny

is called the great cite, not onely because the cite of Rome is the head of the whole Romaine Empire, but because the cite it selfe is increased vnto suche meruailouse greatnesse, that it became a Monarchia, which was not in the other three Monarchies, the beginning whereof were taken of kinges, and not of anye cite. And it is not amisse to saye, that Christ was crucified at Rome, seeing hee was condemned to death of the Romaine president as the enemye of Cesar, the Emperour of Rome, hee was deliuered vp and slayne by that kinde of death, which was established by the lawes of the Romanes. *Ihon Chapter. 19.*

Uers. 9. And they of the people and kindreds and tonges and gentiles shall see there corpses three dayes and an halfe, and shall not suffer there carcasses to be put in graues. &c.

There shall be no nation subiecte to the tyrannye of Rome, whiche shall not see the slaughter of the holy witnesses of Christ, the space of three daies and an halfe, that is for halfe a weeke. For they shall not long feede there ferce eyes with this cruell sight, but God euen in the midst of y^e heat will breake the persecutiō, but yet in the meane time so long as they haue power, they will persecute the godly with suche hatred, that they will also shew there crueltie ouer the verie dead bodies, and shall not suffer them to be buried, but will shewe them open to all men, as it were signes, and tokens of there victorie.

Uers. 10. And they that dwell vpon the earth, shall reioyce ouer them, and be glad and shall send giftes, one to an other, for these two Prophetes vexed them that dwell vpon the earth. &c.

The wicked inhabitantes of the earthe reioysed with themselves and were ioyfull for the destructiō of the prophetes. For those two prophets although they were but few in number, yet they grievously tormented all the wicked inhabitantes of the earth, whyles they thundred y^e thretning of gods worde against their vngodlines. The wicked therefore do testify by this ioy, how great prickes of conscience they were tormented, whē as there sinnes and offences were repponed, and corrected of the

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godly pastors and teachers. For such is the force of gods word, that it tormenteth euen the containners of the same, with the due deserued punishments.

Uers. 11.

But after three dayes and an halfe. &c.

THIS wicked shall not alwaies triumphe over the martirs of Christ which they haue cruelly slayne, but they shall perishe theselues, sooner then they suppose. For all power shall be taken fro Antichrist, which he hath ouer y^e Saints, which although his flatterers and peuissh adherentes do boast, shall be eternall, yet Christ measureth it here by the space of three daies and an halfe. which verely pertaineth bothe to the beatinge downe the pride of the wicked, when as they heare that there kingdome shall indure, but a few dayes, and also to the comforting of the afflicted seruantes of Christ, and to teache and instructe them to patience, when as they vnderstande that in short space of time the tyranny of Antichrist shall be taken from among them.

The spirite of life which came from God entered into the and they stode vp vpon there secte. &c. According to the maner of the prophetes he useth the time passe for the time to come, and the meaning is, that we should not thinke that they are vtterly lost and destroyed, which Antichrist by a diuillish craftie hath slayne and taken away, they which seemed to lye as dead, for the space of three daies and an halfe, at length when the power of there aduersaries is taken awaye, and God geuing them a new life, and standing vprighte vpon there secte, shall proue and shewe that they were not dead, but that they slept onely for a certeyne time. whiche thinge shall clearly be scene in the resurrection of the iust, although this place maye well and fitly be vnderstood of a new raising vp of ministers, which y^e Lord will place in y^e roomes of those which are crowned with martirdome, but chiefly in the ende of the worlde after that the man of sinne is reuealed, which we see is come to pas in this our age.

And great feare came vpon them which sawe them. &c.
The wicked muste needes be stricken with an horrible feare
and

and terrour, when as they shall see them restored againe to life whom they slew, where vpon they certainly vnderstand that they watted against God. For when as precious and deare in the sight of the Lord is the death of his sainctes. Psalm 116. They can not but be grieuonsely tormeted with feare of gods vengeance, which they percepe that they haue prouoked against them selues with blinde madnes and rage.

Uers. 12. And they herde a great voice from heauen saying vnto them come vp hither. &c.

Whiles feare and terrour of eternall damnation, with the greatestt horzour of wicked conscience doth occupy & posses there aduersaries, they are called vp to heauenly ioyes, with a swete voice and full of consolation. This rewarde is layed vp for the faithfull martyres of Christ, that out of prison, tormentes, and death it selfe, being raised vp to a blessed life, they shal receyue a crowne of glorie in the kingdome of heaue, with him, whome they haue witnessed in earth. This hope nourisheth there miudes in the greatestt tormentes, least they should fainte for any paynes or punishments of the bodie, which fighte againste the wicked and haue eternall happines for there rewarde.

And they ascended vp to heauen in a clowde. &c. Like as Christ our head ascended in a clowde, and we also shalbe taken vp in the clowdes to meete Christ as the Apostle witnesseth, so those two prophetes the witnesses of God are sayed to ascend vp into heauen.

And there enemies saw the. &c. Like as they shall see Christ which perced him thorough, euen so shall they see his members the holy martyres lifted vp to heauenly ioye, whiche despised, afflicted, and slew them in earthe, when as they them selues being thrust into the dongeon of hell, shall be tormeted for euer not onely with there owne enils, but also with the blessed estate of there aduersaries. So the riche Blurton saw Lazarus in the bosome of Abraham, whome hee despised as a most vile creature whiles he was lining, neither cared hee to feede him at the least with the cromes yf hee sit at his table. Luke. 16.

A. B.

And

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Uers. 17. And in that hower there was a great earthquake. &c.

When as the ripe and full time shall come in whiche God will take vengeance vpon Antichrist and his folowers, mens matters shalbe shaken with a mightie great motion, all thinges shalbe moued, with warres, with treasons, and with seditions, neither shall Antichrist any lenger inioye his kingdome peaceably which beinge soze troubled with this horrible commotion as it were shaken with an earthquake, shall shortly after fall to vtter ruine. We may suppose that this earthquake hath happened in our age, for we haue partly before our eyes, & partly we beare in freshe memory, with what motions through the cause of religion, all christendome is shaken. And the other thinges which follow in this verse, are playnly sene in this oure time. And the tenth part of the citie fell. &c. There is no mā which knoweth not, how great a deminishing and decay of it selfe the Church of Rome hath suffered, from which very many nations haue vtterly departed, & forsaken it. And also superstition it selfe hath sayled in the tenth parte as inonge the papistes, and they them selues are coustrayned to leaue and forsake many of there toyes and tridles, and to ressefesse certayne errors with which in time past they bound verie straighely the faith of the people.

And in the earthquake there were slayne the names of 7. thousand men. &c. To a great multitude of men, this earthquake shall not onely be troublesome, but also mortall, by the violent force whereof seue thousand men shalbe destroyed: concerning the numbers, of ten, & seuen, we haue often sayed before that they are referred to fulnes & perfection. As this number of 7. thousand comprehendeth all those, whō God hath appointed & ordeyned to punishment in this grienouse comorid of the world. For as many as are not humbled with the scourges of God and called to repentance, those being hardened in there vngodkinesse shall at length beare the deserued punishments of there heynouse offences.

And the remnants were afraied and gaue glorie to the god of heauen. &c. God hath alwaies his remnantes, which according

According to electiō being drawne out of the greatest flames, are preserved and kept to the glorie of his name. The rest thereof being tamed with the rods of God, and taught by the fall and ruine of the other, are instructed to repentance, & being stricken with an earnest feare of god forsaking the filthy worshipping of Idoles, will apply them selues to yelde vp due glory to the God of heaue. we see very many such in our age, which being werie of the errors of Antichrist, do acknowledge the true religion of Christ, and magnifye the God of heauen with y other godly worshippers. Here we ought to reuerence the counsels of god, which are farre aboue y capacitie of our reason. when as the third part of me was slaine by the army of y horsemen as we read in the 9. chap. none repented, but here when the 7. thousand are destroyed, y rest returne to a better minde.

Act. 14. The second wo is past & behold the third wo will come anone.

The seconde wo of those thre, which were foretolde to pertaine to the trumpet of the thre last Angells, wher as the 6. trumpet hath receyued an end, the holyc ghost sheweth that the last wo shall shortly come; which is eternall wo, to all the reprobate, which shalbe published by y trisuper of y 7. Angell. Therefore if we se all things fulfilled which pertaine to the 6. trumpet, y next thing is that we shortly after wait for to heare the sound of the last trumpet in the coming of Christ.

Act. 15. And the seventh Angell blew the trumpet and there were great voices in heauen. &c.

Christ affirmed with an othe in the tenth chapter. That the trumpet of the 7. Angell shold be last, under which y miserie of God shold be finished, as he hath declared to his seruants y prophetes. Therefore when the sound of this trumpet was herd, Thou shewest y praises of God, & of his Christ were song with inenailouse ioy of the heauenly spirites.

Saying the kingdomes of this world are our Lordes and his Christes. &c. The heauenly spirites be ioyfull with God, now when Antichrist and his patrone the deuill, which exercised tyrannie in the world, be vanquished, all the kingdomes of the world are become gods and his Christes to whome they properly pertaine.

And

An exposition vpon the

Uers. 13. And in that hower there was a great earthquake. &c.

*W*hen as the ripe and full time shall come in whiche God will take vengeance vpon Antichrist and his followers, mens matters shalbe shaken with a mightie great motion, all thinges shalbe moued, with warres, with treasons, and with seditions, neither shall Antichrist any lenger inioye his kingdom peaceably which beinge soze troubled with this horrible commotion as it were shaken with an earthquake, shall shortly after fall to bitter ruine. We may suppose that this earthquake hath happened in our age, for we haue partly before our eyes, & partly we beare in freshe memory, with what morions through the cause of religion, all christendome is shaken. And the other thinges which follow in this verse, are playnly sene in this oure time. And the tenth part of the citie fell. &c. There is no mā which knoweth not, how great a deminishing and decay of it selfe the Church of Rome hath suffered, from which very many nations haue utterly departed, & forsaken it. And also superstition it selfe hath fayled in the tenth parte amonge the papistes, and they them selues are coustrayned to leaue and forsake many of there toys and trifles, and to ceaselesse certayne errours with which in time past they bound & straitly the faith of the people.

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Reu. 14. The second wo is past & behold the third wo will come anone.

The seconde wo of those thre, which were foretolde to pertaine to the trumpet of the thre last Aungels, when as the 6. trumpet hath receyued an end, the holyc ghost sheweth that the last wo shall shortly come, which is eternall wo, to all the reprobate, which shalbe published by y trumpet of y 7. Aungell. Therefore if we se all things fulfilled which pertaine to the 6. trumpet, y next thing is that we shortly after wait for to heare the sound of the last trumpet in the comming of Christ.

Reu. 15. And the seventh Aungell blew the trumpet and there were great voices in heauen. &c.

Christ affirmed with an othe in the tenth chapter. That the trumpet of the 7. Aungell shold be last, vnder which y miserie of God shold be finished, as he hath declared to his seruants y prophetes. Therefore when the sound of this trumpet was herd, Thou sheweth y praises of God, & of his Christ were song with inenailouse ioy of the heauenly spirites.

Saying the kingdōmes of this world are our Lordes and his Christes. &c. The heauenly spirites be ioyfull with God, now when Antichrist and his patrone the deuill, which exercised tyrannie in the world, be vanquished, all the kingdōmes of the world are become gods and his Christes to whome they properly pertaine.

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And he shall raigne for euer more. &c. They do not acknowledge an earthly and transiory kingdome of God, but an eternall Dominion, which indureth throughout all ages. But it may be demaunded whether God doth not now also raigne & alwaies hath raigned in the whole world? verely the chiefe gouernement hath alwaies bene Gods, and all things are ruled at his will and pleasure. But now Sathan, and Antichrist by his permission and sufferance obteyne principalitie ouer the darkenes of this worlde, whose power in the daye of the last iudgement shalbe utterly abolished. Therefore God shall then raigne with his Christ, when no aduersaries shall molest or trouble the happines of his Church. And in this song wee may beholde the right holy and godly nature of the heauenlye spirites, that they do not so much reioyce for there owne eternall blessednes, as that they triumphe for the magnifyinge of gods glorie, of which (if we wilbe like vnto them) it becometh vs to be more carefull then of our owne saluatiō. Moreouer this place is of force to ouerthrow the errour of the Christians, which shut vp the kingdome of Christ in the space of a thousand yeares, when as that voice doth clearly confesse that he shall raigne for euer and euer.

Act. 16. Then the 24. elders which sat before God on there seates fell vpon there faces and worshipped God. &c.

The reuerende companie of the 24. elders, whiche beinge placed in seates before the throne of god doe represente the whole fellowship of gods elect, do not omitte there durtie, but falling prostrate before the throne, they humbly worship god with all earnest affection of minde.

Act. 17. Saying we geue the thanks o Lord. &c.

Those also do merrailously reioyce, that all the enemies of god beinge ouerthrowen, hee hath his sound and perfecte glorie. And they sing a song of thankesgivinge saying. we giue thee thanks o Lord. Bycause he hath notwe shewed himselfe to be a reneger of his owne glorie, as though they had receyued some notable and singular benefite, they agree that praise and thanks are to be ascribed to god. And not without iust cause

cause, for nothing ought to be so deare to the sonnes of God, which loue him with there whole harte, as the glorie of there heauenly father, yf neglecting all other thinges they would diligently seeke, they should both shewe them selues to be in deede begotten of God, and also they should the best provide for there owne health yea eternall blessednes.

Lord God almightie, which art and which was, and which are to come. &c. we haue spoken at large before in the first and fourth Chap. of these speaches, by which they attribute all Dominion power and eternitie to God.

For thou hast receyued thy great might and hast obteyned thy kingdome. &c. The heauenly spirites do praise God, that now at length when all his enemies are vanquished he hath receyued the soueraigne rule and gouernement which was alwaies due vnto him, and also hath happely beguine that most peaceable kingdome against which none of all the aduersaries dare oppose and set them selues. For so long as the deuill and Antichrist exercised tyranny in the world, they seemed to raigne alone in y^e earth, & they chiefly laboured in this one thing, that the kingdome of Christ might not stande, but after y^e god hath now opely exercised & declared his great power which befoze lay hid, whē sathā is subdued & y^e kingdom of Antichrist abolished, y^e glory of god shall alone excell, & shine ouer all his creatures.

Vers. 18. And the gentiles were angry. &c.

In my indgement they allude to the beginning of y^e 99. psalm. The lord shall raigne although people be angry. That is in spite of all the prophane enemies, thou onely dost obrayne the empire & Dominio. For the wicked gentiles following y^e campe of Sathā haue set the selues against the kingdome of Christ as much as they could, but David himself foresaw as we read in the 2. psalm, that all there enterprises should be in vaine.

And thy wrathe is come and the time of the deade, that they should be iudged, & that thou shouldest geue reward to thy seruantes the prophets & to the sainctes, & to them that feare thy name, to smale and to greate. &c. Either to the wrath of the wicked gentiles, heretiques, Turkes, hypocrites
hath

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hath raged againſt thee, and the members of thy bodye, and now on the other ſide the time of thy wrath is come, that thou mayeſt deſtroy all thine enemies: For now is that daye come which is terrible to the wicked, in which the dead beinge raiſed to life, may feele the ſeueritie and ſharpenesse of thy iudgement: in which alſo a rewarde not due or deſerued, but promiſed freely may be geuen to thy ſeruants. Not onely to thoſe which thou haſt raiſed vp to the gouernement of thy Church, whome thou haſt endued with the ſpirite of prophecie, but alſo to all the reſt of the ſainctes, whiche worſhippe thee in true faith, and reuerence thy name, as well to the ſmall as to the great.

And ſhouldeſt deſtroye them, that deſtroye the earth. &c.
They pronounce with one worde that the horrible & manifold wickedneſſe of the reprobate ſhalbe puniſhed with grieuouſe tormentes & paynes: and together therewith they ſhew, how equall and juſt it is, that God ſhould for euer deſtroy thoſe, which ſtudied nothing elſe, but to deſtroy & whole worlde with there wickednes.

Act. 19. And the temple of God was open in heauen, and there was ſcene in his temple the arcke of his couenant, and there folowed lightninges and voices, and thunderinges, and earthquake, and muche hayle. &c.

Some doe ioyne this verſe with the Chapter ſolowing, that it might be the beginning of the next viſion, but it ſemeth to me to be the obcluſion and ſhutting vp of this viſion. So that thou doſt teache that after the praifes of God were ſonge of the heauenly companie, the execution of his iudgement, which they ſo often publiſhed abroad, ſhould folowe. Merely when as the temple was open in heauen into which the true worſhippers of God were receyued, and the arcke of couenant openly ſhewed, that is Chriſt, by whoſe mediation they ſhoulde be receyued, for the reſt, it ſhoulde ſtraightwaye lighten, thunder, and hayle from heauen vpon the reprobate and all the army of Satan. by which terrors the wicked beinge diuened to madnes, ſhoulde be thruſt downe to the euerclaſſing paynes

nes of hell. And he doth briefly comprehend in this place the forme and manner of the last iudgemente, which he would afterwarde in the ende of this Prophecie, prosecute moze at large.



¶ The twelfth Chapter.



His thirde vision conteyneth the ix. Chapters folowing, in which the madnes of the Deuill and Antichrist against the Church is described, in other figures then before, yet the same Church by the defence of Christ doth stand and endure safe against all the inuasions of the enemies. And the malignant Church which seduceth the greatest parte of the world into erreur is painted oute in her liuely colours, then folowe the pnnishmentes, which goe before her falle, at length foloweth here extream ruine, which shall neuer be restored or repaired againe, after this followeth the condemnation of the deuill and Antichrist, and the eternall felicitie of the Church after the resurrection, all these thinges are described moze clearly, & moze at large then in the former vision, and the selfe same thing is expounded by sundrye visions, that the truth thereof might be moze certayne and that it might be printed moze depelye in our mindes, whiche the prophetes also do vse often times. And in this 12. Chapter the Church is brought in, suffering persecution of the Prince of darkenes, which is the head of all her enemies: & her state and condition is described of what sorte it should be from the first preaching of the Gospell euen to the ende of the world.

And

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Uers. 1. And there appeared a great wonder in heauen. &c

Great & meruailouse things were to be shewed by a great and wonderfull signe, for it is alone the capacitie of oure wit, how the Church, which is described vnder the figure of a woman weake, vnapt to warre, and vnarmed, coulde anye while stande in safetie, against so sturby and armed enemies. But she appeareth in heauen that her birth & countrie mighte be signified, for here in earth she is but a pilgrime and straunger.

A woman clothed with the sunne. &c. The spouse of Christ is shewed vnder the forme and shape of a woman, whiche of her selfe is weake and without force and strenght, but yet sufficiently furnished against all enemies, with the vertue and strenght of hir spouse Christ. She is seene clothed with the sunne, all whose gloriousse apparail is Christ the sunne of righteousnesse, which spreadeth the beames of his lighte vpon the whole Church.

And the moone vnder her feete. &c. She treadeth vnder her feete all temporall and transitorie things, which although they seeme to shew forth there brightnesse as the lighte of the moone, yet they are in no price or estimation with the Church, in which the gloriousse light of the sunne beinge alwaies present, doth darken all the beames of those things.

And vpon her head a crowne of twelue starres. &c. She hath her head crowned with twelue most bright shining starres eue as it were with a beautilfull crowne, not made of gold or earthly precious stones, but of starres, that is of heauenly matter, whiche is the doctrine of the twelue Apostles whiche they bring lightned of the onely soune the fountrayne of Gods wisdom, haue preached, & after committed the same to writing. But if any object, that not all the writings of the Apostles are extant, neither that they were all Apostles, which writings Gospels, the answer is in a readines, because that doctrine, which was deliuered by a few writers, was neuerthelesse the doctrine of all the twelue Apostles, verely euen y same which being receyued from Christ they preached in the whole world.

re shewed before, y^e in the nūber of twelue is signified, y^e tinity of the Church gathered out of a miserable dispersion, to whiche end Christ chose twelue Apostles, accordinge to the number of so many tribes of Israell, & afterwarde he sent y^e same to y^e gentils which he wold haue to be gathered into one body of Israell.

Verse. 2. And she was with child and cried trauailing in birth and pained, ready to be deliuered. &c.

Although she was barren of her selfe, yet fruitfull by her spouse, and now euen nighe to her trauaile, she is payned with great pensiuenes and carefullnes that she mighte bringe forth that which she hath conceiued by the seede of Gods word. And this is a true and liuely description of the true Church.

Verse. 3. And there appeared a nother woman in heauen. &c.

After the Church described by a notable and cleare figure, followeth a full description of a foule & cruell monster which is enemye of the same. And so like as y^e figure of the womā before painted out, was a wonderfull signe, so likewise the forme and shapē of her enemy seemed to John a thinge woorthy great admiration, whiche was shewed by and by after the most pleasaunt vision of the woman. And it is so much moze meruailouse that so horrible a monster appeareth no where els but in Heauen. But we se in this figure, how farre of it is from the condition of the Church, to want an enemy, whose assaults & inuasions shee is compelled to suffer, euen in heauen. And we may chiefly here acknowledge the malice of y^e deuill, which persecuteth y^e Church euen vnto the heauens, not countinge it not enough to bere the same with greuous tormētes in earth, vnlesse he maye strīue yf he could to plucke doūne her eternall saluation, which is in heauen. Let vs not therfore make anye couenaunt of truce with this enemy, for hee seeketh by all means nothinge els but oure bitter destruction.

Behold a great red Dragō. &c. He vseth an aduerbe of the workinge for to direct by greater attention. For the thinge is woorthy to be diligently noted and considered, this terrible Dragon

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is that olde serpent whiche seduced y first woman to the destru-
tion of the whole worlde, now laboreth diligently, not only by
subtily as in tyme past, but also by force and cruelty to bringe
into destruction, this woman restored to her olde and also a far
better state & condition by Christ. And seing all kind of serpents
are both terrible & hatefull to vs, y great dragon canot but raise
vp great terrore of himselfe, and also no lesse hatred to all those
which haue a care to eschew his poisoned and venim bitinges
Add moreouer vnto these, that shining in his spery colloure he
thetnith nothing els to all those, which he shall enticelinglye
draw into his net, but made fory and rage of destroyinge, and
the studious care and desire of sheading bloud.

Hauiug seuen heades and ten hornes, and vpon his heades
seuen crownes. &c. He is not simple in subtily or a poisonful
spirite of one mouth, but a deformed monster with seuen heads
he testifieth by the number of y same heads that he inuenteth &
deniseth all kindes of craftes and subtilties, like as being armed
with seuen hornes he boasteth y he weareth crownes vpon eue-
ry one of his heades, it sheweth his innumerable victories by
which he hath subdued to his obedienc al the whole worlde.

Uers. 4. And his tayle drew the thirde part of the starres of heauen
and cast them to the earth. &c.

IT may also be here gathered what strength he had in his ho-
rnes, and his heades, seeing that by casting his taile onely, y is
the lust of earthly things y he drew the thirde part of the starres
to the earth that is many of the teachers which for a tyme seemed
to shine as starres in heauen, which being addit to the studey
of earthly pleasures, haue vtterly lost all there heauenly bright-
nes, by which wicked acte he taketh greater corage, and hope y
he can more easely ouerthrow also the whole church. Moreouer
it is beare shewed how great the vnumerable hugenes of that
monstrous body is, whose meruailouse longe taile would suf-
fice to cast downe the thirde parte of the starres. Suche and so
great is the enemye of the Church.

And the Dragon stode before the woman, which was reay-
dye

dye to be deliuered to deuoure her children, when she had brought it forth. &c. It is shadowed vnder this figure with how great madnes the deuill would rage against the Church. The Dragon waiteth vpon the woman, which is in traualle that he might deuoure the infante so soone as it shoulde be borne. How diligently Sathan laboured euen in the first beginning of the Church to destroye her tender babe, and first issue that there might no posteritie of the same remayne in the world, we knowe by histories. what lesse he vndone by his ministers the Jewes, the priestes, and the Pharisees, that the doctrine of Christ might not be spread abroad in the worlde, but might be utterly extinguished with the Apostles them selues. With what violent rage did he stirre vp Nero and other bloudie Emperours that they might utterly subuert the whole Church, by murdering infinite numbers of his children, the faithfull confessours & martyres of Christ. The deuill therefore would haue destroyed the infante of the Church, euen in the verie birth thereof, if the successe had bene agreeable to his will and carefull traualle.

Uers. 5. And she brought forth a male Child. &c.

The Dragons hope deceyueth him, for although he had assayed euerie way, yet he might destroye the fruite & offspring of the Church euen in the verie birth, yet the Church brought forth a male child strong and liuely, which in spite of Sathan should receiue the inheritance of rule, and Dominion appointed and ordeyned for him of God the father.

Which should rule all nations with a rod of Iron. &c. This prophecie is of Christ in the 2. psalm. Therefore Christ is formed in the hartes of y^e faithfull by the ministrie of the Gospell as Paule witnesseth to the Galath. 4. chapt. And Christ doth compell all nations to his obedience although they obstinately resist, breaking them with a rod of Iron. And the members of Christ which are the faithfull through him are made partakers of the same kingdome. The deuill lieth craftily in waite for these that he might deuoure them, so soone as they be brought forth into the light of y^e Gospell, But he doth not obteyne his

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desire, for howsoeuer he shall conspire with the whole army of hell to bring them to destruction, yet the lord will not giue the for a praye vnto his teeth. It foloweth therefore.

And her sonne was taken vp to God and to his throne. &c. Under the protection and defence of God, he is in safetie, so that he whome the Dragon desired to be drowned in the bottomles pit of hell, is taken vp to god, and to the throne of his maiestie, & drawne out of the Hawes of the deuill. For Christ whome the deuill wished so much to be destroyed, sitteth at the right hand of the diuine glorie, to the whiche dignitie also of heauenly glorie, by his benefite are exalted, as manye as are made the Children of God and of the Church by faithe. In vaine therefore Sathan seeketh there destruction, whome God hath drawne vp to him selfe, and hath so receyued them to the throne of his glorie. How greedely the deuill assayed to blotte out the name of Christianitie in the first sprecading abroade of the same, we haue befoze touched, but what prossured he in the ende in bestowing so great labour? For how much moze his ministers raged in there madnes with sword and fire, and all kinde of tormentes against, the child of the Church, that they might destroy him yet being but an infant & not able to make battell, so much the moze godlines increased exccadingly, and the Church dayly receyued such increasings, as were not to be ashamed of. And Christ whose glorie the Deuill so greatly enuied, sitting in the throne of gods maiestie defendeth y godly from heauen, taketh vengeance vpon his enemies, and bestoweth all kinde of good giftes vpon his Church. we neede not feare therefore, least that the whole Church should euer be subiecte to the tirannie of the Dragon.

Clers. 6. And y woman fled into wilderness where she hath a place prepared of god, & there should fede her there, a 1000. 200. & threescore dayes.

After that he had declared how y the sonne of the womā was take vp into a place of safetie, now he teacheth how prouision is made also for y womā hir self. God could at his wil binde & restraine the deuill that he should not hurte the Church at all. But this is the most wise dispensation of his holpe will, that when she hath bene proued, & tried by sundrie afflictions in the
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woulde, he will at length, take her to himselfe into heauen: yet in the meane time he doth not saye her euen in the mooste desperate matters, but sendeth aye from heauen in due season. Therefore he openeth a way for the woman to flye, that she might for a time eschewe the violence of y^e Dragon. Christ himselfe also permitted this maner of auoydinge daunger to his apostels Mathew the 10. But when and who ought to fly when persecution approcheth it is not so easie to expresse in wordes, as that the holy ghost shall inwardly instruct euery one when time shalbe. But that we should not thinke, that the woman should perishe in the desert, where there is the scarcitie of all thinges. S. Iohn doth expresse, that there was also in the desert a seat prepared for her of God, whereas she might safely for a time appointed by God, breathe and refreshe her selfe from y^e persecutiō of the Dragon. And least we might suppose that she should in the meane time want any thinge, he sheweth that she shalbe nourished and fed there for a thousande two hundredeth and sixty daies, that is, by the space of two and forty monthes, which make three yeares and an halfe, which short time, when as it is the halfe of a propheticall weeke, is sayed to be graunted to Satan and Antichrist, that they cannot any longer oppresse or afflict the Church. Moreover this place doth plainly shew, that the church shall not alwaies be visible to the world, which thing the papistes doe vrge most of all, for if it should be alway in the sight of all men, how may she be sayed to fly into y^e wilderness? Yea it is certaine by this place, that the Church of Rome is not signified by this woman, which was neuer banished and driuen into the wilderness, from y^e eies of men. And lastlye we are here also taught that we must aunswere to oure aduersaries whiche aske vs where oure Church was before these two or three hundred yeares. Merely if we know y^e true worship of God, was to be found in no region of Europe or Asia, it is enough that it was in y^e desert, that is in places not commonly knowen, that it lay hid by the decree of god, euen vnto the time by him appointed, for y^e number of y^e elect, whiche is y^e church shall neuer faile

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And her sonne was taken vp to God and to his throne. &c. Under the protection and defence of God, he is in safetie, so that he whome the Dragon desired to be drowned in the bottomles pit of hell, is taken vp to god, and to the throne of his maiestie, & drawne out of the clawes of the deuill. For Christ whome the deuill wished so much to be destroyed, sitteth at the right hand of the diuine glorie, to the whiche dignitie also of heauenly glorie, by his benefite are exalted, as manye as are made the Childzen of God and of the Church by faithe. In vaine therefore Sathan seeketh there destruction, whome God hath drawne vp to him selfe, and hath so receyued them to the throne of his glorie. How greedely the deuill assayed to blotte out the name of Christianitie in the first spreading abroade of the same, we haue before touched, but what profited he in the ende in bestowing so great labour? For how much more his ministers raged in there madnes with sword and fire, and all kinde of tormentes against, the child of the Church, that they might destroy him yet being but an infant & not able to make battell, so much the more godlines increased exceedingly, and the Church dayly receyued such increasings, as were not to be ashamed of. And Christ whose glorie the Deuill so greatly enuied, sitting in the throne of gods maiestie defendeth y godly from heauen, taketh vengeance vpon his enemies, and bestoweth all kinde of good giftes vpon his Church. we nede not feare therefore, least that the whole Church should euer be subiecte to the tyrannie of the Dragon.

Uers. 6. And y woman fled into wilderness where she hath a place prepared of god, & they should fede her there, a 1000. 200. & thre score dayes.

After that he had declared how y the sonne of the womā was takē vp into a place of safetie, now he teacheth how prouision is made also for y womā hir self. God could at his wil binde & restraine the deuill that he should not hurte the Church at all. But this is the most wise dispensation of his holpe will, that when she hath bene proued, & tried by sundrie afflictions in the

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worlde, he will at length, take her to himselfe into heauen: yet in the meane time he doth not sayle her euen in the mooste desperate matters, but sendeth ayed from heauen in due season. Therefore he openeth a way for the woman to flye, that she might for a time escape the violence of y^e Dragon. Christ himselfe also permitted this manner of auoydinge daunger to his apostels Mathew the 10. But when and who ought to fly when persecution approacheth it is not so easie to expresse in wordes, as that the holy ghost shall inwardly instruct euery one when time shalbe. But that we should not thinke, that the woman should perishe in the desert, where there is the scarcitie of all thinges. S. Iohn doth expresse, that there was also in the desert a seat prepared for her of God, where as she might safely for a time appointed by God, breath and refreshe her selfe from y^e persecutioⁿ of the Dragon. And least we might suppose that she should in the meane time want any thinge, he sheweth that she shalbe nourished and fed there for a thousande two hundred and

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byed yeares. Merely if we know y^e way, it is enough that it was in y^e desert, that is in places not commonly knowen, that it lay hid by the decree of god, euen vnto the time by him appointed. For y^e number of y^e elect, whiche is y^e church shall neuer faile

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Chap. 12. And y^e woman fled into wilderness where she hath a place prepared of god, y^e they should fede her there, a 1000. 200. & threfoze dayes.

After that he had declared how y^e sonne of the womā was take vp into a place of safetie, now he teacheth how prouision is made also for y^e womā hir self. God could at his wil binde & restraine the deuill that he should not hurte the Church at all. But this is the most wise dispensation of his holpe will, that when she hath bene proued, & tried by sundrie afflictions in the
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woulde, he will at length, take her to himselfe into heauen: yet in the meane time he doth not sayle her euen in the mooste desperate matters, but sendeth aye from heauen in due season. Therefore he openeth a way for the woman to flye, that she might for a time escape the violence of y^e Dragon. Christ himselfe also permitted this manner of auerdinge daunger to his apostels Mathew the 10. But when and who ought to fly when persecution approacheth it is not so easie to expresse in wordes, as that the holy ghost shall inwardly instruct euery one when time shall be. But that we should not thinke, that the woman should perishe in the desert, where there is the scarcitie of all thinges. S. Iohn doth expresse, that there was also in the desert a seat prepared for her of God, whereas she might safely for a time appointed by God, breathe and refresh her selfe from y^e persecutioⁿ of the Dragon. And least we might suppose that she should in the meane time want any thinge, he sheweth that she shall be nourished and fed there for a thousande two hundred and sixty daies, that is, by the space of two and forty monthes, which make three yeares and an halfe, which short time, when as it is the halfe of a propheticall weeke, is sayed to be graunted to sathan and Antichrist, that they cannot any longer oppresse or afflict the Church. Moreouer this place doth plainly shew, that the church shall not alwaies be visible to the world, which thing the papistes doe bragge most of all, for if it should be alway in the sight of all men, how may she be sayed to fly into y^e wilderness: Yea it is certaine by this place, that the Church of Rome is not signified by this woman, which was neuer banished and driuen into the wilderness, from y^e eyes of men. And lastlye we are here also taught that we must aunswere to oure aduersaries whiche aske vs where oure Church was before these two or three hundred yeares. Merely if we know y^e true worship of God, was to be found in no region of Europe or Asia, it is inough that it was in y^e desert, that is in places not commonly knownen, that it lay hid by the decree of god, euen vnto the time by him appointed. For y^e number of y^e elect, whiche is y^e church shall neuer faile

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but God doth preserue & kepe to himselfe 7. thousande men, which haue neither bowed the knee to Baal nor kissed his Image with the mouth, & that, when as Elias beleued that hee remayned alone in the people of Israell. How much more is it like that there remayned many elect of God, throughout the large regions of Asia, & Europe, & also some parts of Africa, in which the name of Christ is spoken of, which although they were vnknewen to Antichrist & his adherentes, yet they offered and yelded to god his due honour. The papistes therefore to there owne hurt do boast of there visible Church, and rashly do condemne oures, because it was some time trauisble to the Romanistes. For in this it is more like to this true Church, that it sometime laye hidde: and there synagoge alwaies visible, doth sufficiently bewray it selfe not to be this womā, which fled into the desert.

Uers. 7. 8. And there was a battell in heauen, Michaell and his Angels fought against the Dragon, and the Dragon and his Angels fought, but they preuailed not, neither was there place any more founde in heauen. &c.

The first attempt or enterprise of Sathan was most dangerous, namely that he might scale away, and deuoure the infant of the Church, so soone as it were borne, & that he might deprive the Church for euer, of her eternall happenes. But Christ the defendour of his spouse setteth himselfe against the wicked enterprises and practises of the Deuill, & so the scarce battell arose in heauen, whilst Sathan studieth vterly to destroy the Church, and Christ to saue, and defend the same for euer. Therefore I expound this battelle, which was foughte in heauen, of the studie and enterprise of the Deuill, whereby he chiefly labourerth with all diligence to assalte & eternall saluation of the Church, which is founded in Christ, & his madnesse and impudencie is noted, that he dare fight with God himselfe. (Michaell and his Angels) Michaell that great prince of the army of God doth signifie Christ, which is the generall captayne of our oste, which thing is also taughte in the 9. 10. & 12. chap. of Daniell, That he ioyneth to him selfe the Angels,

gells, it doth not argue that there is weaknes or want of strength in him, but he doth it to encrease oure confidence and trust. For the Dragon mustreth his armye on euery side of the Angels of darkness, and putteth forth all his strength to oppresse Christ. But what was the ende of the battell? They preuailed not neither was there place founde any moze in heauen. The terrible Dragon garded with the infinite thousandes of his seldiers can do nothinge against Christ, whiche defendeth the health of his Church. Satan therefore beinge ouercome with all his whole armye, is compelled to leaue of the battell, and not that onely, but also beinge depriued of all hope of renewinge the warre, he with all his souldiers is cast downe vnto y^e earth. Now therefore is the saluation of the elect certen, when as the deuill himselfe hauinge assayed and proued all his strength to bryake and overthrow the same, beinge put to shamefull flighte, is ouerthrowen by the vertue and power of the most mighty Michaell.

Uers. 9. And the great Dragon that olde serpent called the deuill and Satan was cast out, which deceueth al the world, and he was cast into the earth and his Kingdome were cast out with him. &c.

After that he had sayed that hee was driuen oute of Heauen that his place could there no longer be found, neither coulde hee frustrate, or make voyde the euerlastinge saluation of the Church, hee sheweth whither hee was thruste oute into Banishment withe his whole army, that is to saye into the earth, that he mighte exercise his madde rage onelye vppon the reprobate, and that hee mighte afflict the Church with temporall evils onely, and yet that he mighte not obteyne that he woulde: that is, that throughe the terrour, and feare of tormentes, hee myghte driue her oute of the earth. Moreouer wee muste obserue with what sundrie names and titles the holy ghost setteth him out, that all his malice and subtil deceptes mighte bee perceyued. Firste he is called, that great Dragon, whiche is described before in the thirde Verse of

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this Chapter. Secondly, that olde serpent which seduced oure first parentes to disobedience, now so much more subtil, as he is more ancient by long vse and experience. Thirdly he is called in grecke euen as it were by his proppr name, Diabolos, which in english is deuill, & is a false accuser, which with false crimes, and secrete accusations neuer ceased to accuse the godly before the Lord God, that if he could by any meanes, he might bring them into Gods hatred. Fourthly he is called in Hebrew Sathan, that is an aduersarie, the sworn enemy of Christ and all godly men, at whose handes we oughte to looke for nothing, but enmitie, whom, it behoueth vs chiefly both to hate and take heed of. Fyfthly hee is called the deceiver of the whole worlde, of whome how great the deceites are, and with what diligent care of vs to be eschewed, we may knowe sufficiently euen by this place, & he hath seduced the whole worlde, that is the greatest parte of the worlde, into errors, and false worshipping of God, whereby we vnderstande, that, that is not the verie catholique Church in dede, which boasterh in the greatest multitude of men, neither therfore to be called catholique or vniuersall, bycause all giue there consent into the same, seeing the Deuill here deceyeth the whole worlde: but that which all & godly do acknowledge for there mother, although the reprobate in respecte of number, by infinite partes do errede them.

Uers. 10. And Therde a lowde voice sayng, &c.

After so glorious a victorie ouer Sathan and his army, the heavenly spirites do sing a triumphant song to God and his Christ. By whiche we are taught that the glorie of god is alwaies to be celebrated of vs in the Church for so vnspokeable a benefite. That he sayeth a lowde voice, he sheweth both the multitude and also the feruent zeale of the singers, for we ought all earnestly to bust forth to the singing and celebrating of gods praises.

In heaven nowe is saluation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ. &c. There is uttered in this song, what fruite and commoditie there is of
so nota

so notable a victorie. For in sayinge that there is saluation in heaue, they vnderstand that the euerlasting health of y^e Church doth now remayne vnshaken after y^e deuill which assayed to oppresse the same with warre, is vanquished & cast downe prostrate vnto the earth. The vertue and power of god hath shewed forth it selfe, to beate downe the violence of Sathan. And now the kingdome of God ouer the saintes, whiche the proude Dragon desired, remayneth vniuolate, when the Dragon is thrust out. And especially the dignitie of Christ doth excell ouer all the power of the aduersarie, by whose gouernement the battaill is fought, and likewise by his invincible vertue and power all the whole army with there caprayne are ouerthrowne.

Bycause the accuser of our brethren is cast downe, which accused them before our God day and night. &c. He which worried continually the eares of god with dayly false accusations layed to the charge of the godly, that he might spoile the of eternall blisse, and as if they were guiltie of eternall deathe might make them bond slaues to the tormentes of hell. But god will now no longer abide to heare any accusatiōs against his saintes, which are washed with the bloude of his sonne. who shall lay any thing to the charge of gods chosen: it is god which iustificeth, who is he that shall condemne? Rom. 8.

Act. 1. And they overcame him by the bloud of the lambe and by the worde of his testimonie: and they loued not there liues vnto the death. &c.

Vnderfull is the clemencie of Christ that he taketh his saintes into the praise of this victorie, but yet in such sorte as redoubteth to his owne glorie. The heauenly spirites therefore reioyce with the faithfull for there victorie, but yet obteyned not by there owne blond, but by the bloud of Christ, althoughe they them selues also powred forth there liues in battaill. And this Angelicall song doth clearly teache with what armour and weapons the faithfull maye overcome the deuill, that is with the shield of faith, which is in the bloud of the labe, which offered vp him selfe a sacrifice for there sinnes,

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And with the sworde of Gods worde and the confession of the name of Christ, which they were neuer ashamed of before we, although for witnessling the same they should suffer most bitter death. After the same maner oughte all the godly to be prepared to whome the glory of God & his Gospell is precious, that they may not loue there lines vnto death. as oft as necessitie of confessing his name doth require y^e same. And although the daunger of death be absent, yet the same affection ought alwaies to be with vs, that we may not loue our lines euen to the death, in cōparison of holding the incomparable treasure of the truth of Gods gospel.

Uers. 12.

Therefore reioyce ye heauens and ye
that dwell in them. &c.

A benefite is bestowed vpon those in vaine, whereof they that are partakers, haue no fruition in the same. And often times it cometh to pas through our peruerse crookednesse, that being adoynd with great benefites of God, we feele no fruite of the same. Therefore they exhorted the heauen, and all the heauenly spirites that they would bee touched with the moste ioyfull sense and feelinge of so great a good, and for the same would reioyce with ioye vspeakable, that to Christ, glorie, and to the Church, eternall saluation, is obreynd by this so gloriousse a victorie.

Wo be to the Inhabitanes of the earthe and the sea, for the Deuill is come downe vnto you, which hath great wrath knowing that he hath but a shorte time. &c. They doe not so muche curse the wicked, as that they expresse there most grievous drangers, to the seducing of whom, the deuill descended into the earth full of furie and wrath. (Of the earth and y^e sea) according to the literall sense is vnderstoode the inhabitants of the mayne lande, and Ilandes, but figuratiuely he vnderstandeth all the reprobate, which are so much addicted to earthly and flesh pleasures, that they neuer looke vp into heauē, to make whome blinde and that worthely, the Deuill descended, not more moued by his owne furie, then sente downe by the iudge.

iudgement of god. Whose madnes, they shewe, shoulde be so much the more scarce and cruell, bycause he knew for certeinly that a verie short time was graunted him to stirre vp his tragedies in. He will therefore pretermite nothing in the meane time, whereby he maye drawe a large and fatte praye into his nettes. what doth he therefore.

Uers. 13. And when the Dragon sawe that he was cast vnto the earth, he persecuted the woman which had brought forth the man childe. &c.

Vhen he sawe that he was driuen oute of heauen, that he could not by charging and false accusing hinder the eternall saluation of the churche, percepuinge the same to be yet warring in earthe, he raiseth vp horrible persecutions against her by his ministers the tyrantes. And whē as he could not deuoure the childe which the woman broughte forth, for whiche he had long time lien subrillye in waite, he persecuteth the woman which brought forth, with beastly crueltie. Being overcome of the head, he setteth vpon the bodie. we may note here the deuillish crueltie of some men, whiche if they can not bring the greatest hurtēs vpon the godly, as death it selfe, that they oo not leaue of to hurte by suche meanes as they be able, they violently spoile them of there goodes, they defame them with reproches and sclaunders, & hate also euen there friends, for there sakes.

Uers. 14. But to the woman were geuen two winges of a grent Eagle.

Before he sayed that the woman beinge deliuered of her child fled into y wilderness: now he sheweth by what meanes she coulde eschew or flye the meruailous swiftnes of the dragon in pursuinge. Two winges, saith he were geuen vnto her, with whiche she be came swifter then the deuill, and he addeth moreouer (of a great Eagle) that we shoulde vnderstand, that the woman might safely trust vnto them. By the winges we may acknowledge the sundry & vnaccustomable waies and meanes of flying whiche the Lord openeth to the Church as ofte as he hath decreed to deliuer the same by flight from the hands of tyrants.

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That she might fly into the wildernes, into her place where she is nourished for a time, times, and halfe a time, from the presence of the serpent. &c. we haue spoken before in the 6. verse, of the flight into the desert, and of the wonderfull providence of God, whiche euen in the scarcitie and want of all thinges provideth not only lodging but also meate for nourishment. And the space which is here darchly called, a time, times, & halfe a time, I enterprete to be y^e same, whiche he sayed a thousand two hundred and sixtie daies, that is, three yeares and an halfe. so that one time maye agree to a yeare, two times, to two yeares, and halfe a time, to halfe a yeare, for in Daniell to whome he alludeth, times are read in the duall number, that they might signifie two times. And these appellations of time, seme to be applied to the sense & affection of y^e Church which was banished. For she thinketh the time of her calamitie long, and afterward follow two times, which increase the wearinesse, but at length the halfe time, when as the matters seme almost desperate, doth manifestly shewe that accordinge to the promise of our saviour, the dayes of affliction are shortned.

Uers. 15. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water after the woman as it had bene a river, because she should haue bene caught of the floude. &c.

The deuill being vanquished an hundred times yet repeareth the battaill againe, and though violence haue small successe, yet he absteyneth not from craftes and subtilties. He foloweth the woman therefore flying into the wildernes, whō he cā not catche and teare with his teerh, with reproches, lies, and slanderes framed by heritiques, and hypocrites, whereby if he could he couereth to bring her into an euill repaire. And we see what a great floude of lies and reproches hee hath cast after her by the Arrians, Pelagians, Papistes, and other such like hypocrites, by which he studied, and also now studieth to draw her in to the hatred of Princes, mightie men, & moreener of all those which gaue any credite vnto them. But Satan shall neuer haue successe or preuaile by his subtilties, for he foloweth.

But

Uers. 16. But f earth holpe the womā, & the earth opened her mouth & swallowed vp f riuier, which the dragon cast out of his mouth. &c.

HE which deliuered his Church from the greatest violence, and crueltie of the enemies, will not suffer her to be taken with the subtill sleightes of Sathan, but the earth shall rather open her mouth as it did in time past to swallow vp the whole faction of Chore, Dathan, and Abyrame, then that at the will and pleasure of the Deuill a heare should fall from her head. And we see that all the deuises of heretiques against the Catholique Church, by which the dragon hoped that the woman should be destroyed, haue vanished away, as though they were broncke vp of the earth, and yet the Church her selfe, now at length drawen out of secret places, standeth innouable, and shall stand for euer, euen vnto the ende of the world. We may here note that the heauen the earth, and all thinges, which are in them, do helpe the godly, as ofte as the Lorde will deliuer them out of the handes of the enemies. And also that wee be not so much moued and tronbled, for the reproches and scalders of the enemies of the Church, heritiques and hypocrites, (which are the instruments of the deuill) by which they inuour, euen like a most swift flood to draw her, and her members into harred and enuie. For all there lies shall shortly be swallowed vp by f earth, & there deuillish enterprises shalbe brought to naught.

Uers. 17. Then the Dragon was wroth with the woman: and went & made warre with the remnant of her seed, which kepe the commandments of god, & haue the testimonie of Iesus Christ.

THe deuill hauing set vpō her so often with so great violence, and being so often so shamefully repelled, it is no meruaile thoughe hee be diuinen into wrath and furie, yet notwithstanding he leaue the not of from his purpose, whiche hee tooke in hand. But although he can not oppresse the whole Church with the sundry sleightes which he hath inuented, yet he persecuteth euerie one of her members with a meruaillouse study and care of destroyinge. He maketh the warre therefore with the remnant of her seed, wheresoeuer they be dispersed throughe the whole Earthe, and hee neuer leaue the of, to assaulte them

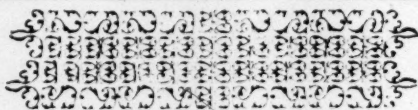
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them partly by force, and partly by deceites, whom we ought to resist strong in faith, putting on the whole armour of God which the Apostle describeth in the 6. Chap. to the Ephe. And in that he calleth the sonnes of y Church the seede of the woman, he alludeth to that, which the Lorde pronounced of the seede of the woman, which should breake the serpentes head, that we should not feare the inuasion of him, whose head being broken by Christ, is deliuered also vnto vs, which are the seede of the woman, to be troden vpon. Furthermore he briefly expresseth, whome he numbrieth among the lawfull sonnes of the Church, that is they which kepe the commaundements of God, and also do openly confesse the faith of Christ, whiche they embrace.

Uers. 18.

And I stood on the sea sande. &c.

This verse pertaineth to the vision of the Chapter following. Iohn therefore thought in a vision that he stood vpon the shoore, that he might beholde the beast ascendinge out of the sea.



The thirteenth Chapter.



Then as he had shewed that the deuill the chiefe enemye of the Church attempteth all thinges for the destruction of the same, now he sheweth in this chapter, what principall instrumentes he would vse, in oppugning the saluatiō of the same, verely euen the Romayne Empire that is Antichrist and his most cruell ministers.

Uers. 1.

And I saw a beast rise out of the sea. &c.

Antis

Anrichrist is compared to a moste cruell beast, because he persecuteth the Church without all reason, or any sense or feelinge of humanitie. Moreover he is not called *Λωβ*, but *Αν*, *109* that is a certayne wilde and cruell beast. For of the brute beastes, some although they want reason, yet they are gentle and hurtlesse, but Antichrist is a beast of untamed wildenes, voide of all shew of gentlenes. For no otherwise then a wild beast through hunger rampeth vpon the pray offered him, doth Antichrist rage vpon the Church. But he is also sayed to ascende out of the sea, that in the verie birth or firste springing vp he might shewe of what sorte his rule & Dominion should be, that is troublesome, and tempestuouse, diuers and inconsistent. And histories do testify out of how great waues of battaill, and tumultes the Romayne Empire hath risen.

Having seuen heades and ten hornes, and vpon his hornes were ten crownes and vpon his heade, the name of blasphemie. &c. By the number of heades, and hornes this monster bewrayeth him selfe of what father he was begotten, verelye of the great Dragon, whose naturall properties he thoroughly resembleth. For although the Monarchie of the Romaynes was ordeyned by God, euen as all power is of God, yet in as much as it abounded in fraudes, tyrannie crueltie & lust, and that it persecuted the Church of Christ, it was of the deuill, but chiefly when all the power thereof was translated to the Pope, which is chiefly figured vnder this beast, withoute all doubt it is to be acknowledged to be the verie naturall soune of Sathan, but when as other notes also of him, by the number of his heades and hornes are propounded of the Angell in the 17. Chapter, we will not touche them before we come to that place. That he weareth ten crownes in his hornes, when as the Dragon had but seuen on his heades, it semeth to be referred to that, that the ten hornes do signifye kinges, which in the beginning were consuls onely and presidents of prouinces, but when as this beast shall the second time rise by they shall together with the beaste in one hower receyue kingly power, of which there foloweth more in the 17. Chap.

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And he beareth in his heades the name of blasphemie, when he callerth himselfe the head of the vniuersall Church. For although in his decrees, and other writings approued of him, horrible blasphemies may be found, in which he is called sometime neither God, nor man, but as it were a neuter betwene both, sometime he is called Christ, sometime our Lorde God, and sometime God aboue all gods, yet he beareth that name openly in his head to be scene of all men, whereby he boasteth himselfe to be Christes vicare as though he were absent, and plucketh to him selfe alone, the knowledge of all causes, & he boasteth that he can not erre in any thing. The like blasphemies vttered his predecessours, Caligula, Nero, Domitian, Diocletian, which commaunded that they them selues should be worshipped as Gods, & that temples should be buylte and altars consecrated to there godhead. But none more impudently then the Romayne Bishops, for all men did marke and deride the folly and madness of the emperours, although they flattered them most filthily,, but almost all haue in good earnest acknowledged the diuinitie of the pope, and haue asked that of him, which is the proprietie of God alone to graunt, as remission of sinnes and other such like.

Uers. 1. And this beast which I saw was like a cat of the mountayne, and his feete were as the feete of a beare, and his mouth as the mouth of a Lyon. &c.

By this description it is more clearer then the lighte it selfe, that the Romayne Empire is assigned, which did conteyne in it the power of the other throe kingdomes, which are described by the similitudes of a Lion, a Beare and a Carte of the mountayne, Daniell chapter 7. But the fourth monarchie that is of the Romaynes, composed of the pride, raueninge, and cruelty of all the rest, was unlike to all the other. He hath therefore a bodie like to a catte of the mountayne, which signified Alexander the great, which was most swifte to followe after the praye, he hath the feete of a Beare, by which he is equall in rauening with the Medes, and Persians, but he hath y^e mouth of a Lion, by whiche he excederth in haughtinesse and pride the

A Miri.

Assirians and Chaldeans and he spreadeth in crueltie the fiercenesse of all beastes.

And the Dragon gaue him his power and his throne, and great authoritie. &c. He receyveth not onely the power to hurte, and persecute of the Deuill, but also he occupieth his seate in earthe, that the power of Sathan is manifeste to bee seene in nothing more then in his Elcare Antichrist, and this is that sea of Antichrist, and authoritie of the Pope, of which they boast so much of, that is to saye, the throne of the Deuill and power receyued at his hande. But it maye bee demaunded how the Deuill coulde giue power, or empire, seeinge all powers are of him, whiche also bestoweth them vpon the wicked and Tyrants. But in the tyrannicall power two things are to be considered, the one is the ordinance of GOD, whiche disposeth all Kingdomes at his will, and to whome he will. And the other is, there fraudes, there treasons, and cruelties, by whiche they aspire to the gouernement, whiche things are of the Deuill. The deuill therefore graunted power and authoritie to Antichrist, in as much as by his prouocation, by all wickednesse and impietie they attayne that tyrannie, which occupie that seate.

Act. 3. And I saw one of his heades as it were wounded to death but his deadly wound was healed, and all the souldie woundyd and folowed the beast. &c.

Almost all interpretours do graunte that a great diminishing of the power of Antichrist is signified by this head that was wounded, but when it was wounded they agreed not. For some dooe suppose that it wounded at the time when as that Iohn Husse, and Hierome of Prague in disclofinge the subtilties of ANTICHRIST, separated a great parte of the Kingedome of Bohemia, from the authoritie of that sea. Other doe expounde it of Julius Cesar, others of Nero beeing slayne. Others doe referre it to the Citie of Rome taken, burned and spoiled by the Gothes. But to me, whiche by the Beast, doe vnderstande not the lawfull administration of the Empire, but the tyrannicall power in
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persecutinge the Church, that hee seemeth then to haue bene wounded vnto death when as constantine the great after that Maxentius, and Licinius the last persecutinge tyrants of the heathenish emperours were slaine, in graunting peace to the Church, smote that most cruell and monstrouse head of Antichrist with a deadly wounde. But shortly after that wounde was healed by the wicked emperours Constantius and Julianus, valence, and others of whom some beinge heretiques and Julianus a forsaker of the faith, persecuted the righte Church vntill at length the bloudye tyrante Phocas, and murderer of his Lord and Master Maxentius, resigned the Antichristian Kingdome to Boniface the Pope, in whome and his successors plainly reuiued y^e head of deuilish tyranny which was almost cut of by Constantine. Yet in the meane I acknowledge y^e horrible destruction, & calamities of men by battell, which were broughte to the lawfull Empire of the Romaines by the barbarouse people, the Gothes, Vandales, and Saracenes, opened and prepared a way to the rule of the Romaine, bishop. And this also is manifest by the writinge and monumentes of the learned, y^e the bishoppricke of Rome, from Syluester vnto Fabianus beinge increased in riches, & that through the fauour of the Emperours, it did litle and litle degenerate into forreine rule and gouernment, vntill at length it ascended to the verie pynnet and top of Antichristian Authority. Wherevpon to the greate wonder of the worlde his Kingdome was established, lifted, and exalted so high oute of so obscure and darke beginnings.

These. 4. And they worshipped the Dragon which gaue power to the beast, and they worshipped the beast sayinge, who is like vnto the beast? who is able to warre with him. &c.

It is miraculous that hee saith men worshipped the deuill, whome euery where all do abhorre and detest. But he understanderh that the worshipp and obedience, whiche was yelded to Antichrist of the menne that were seduced, perteyned to the spreading abroad of the deuills kingdome, seeing they honoured **Sathan**

Sathan in his vicar or legat. Like as they doe honour the kinge which reuerence those magistrates, which he hath appointed vnder him. And that he expresseth when as immediately he addeth (and they worshipped the beast, saying, who is like to the beast? whose power is so great y he can forgine sinnes, & open the kingedome of heauen to whome he will. who is able to warre against him? which draweth downe Emperours, and Kinges as ofte as he lust, oute of there statelpe scare, whiche thundreth oute the sentences of cursing, against his enemies, and through the fulnesse of his power he can thrust downe his aduersaries euen into hell.

Verf. 5. And there was geuen him a mouth that spake great things and blasphemies. &c.

I f any shall meruaile howe the maiestie of God can suffer so great blasphemies, which the deuill and Antichrist shew out against the same: Saincte Iohn maketh aunswere shewing that this is by diuine permission, that Antichrist should exaule him selfe aboute all heyggh, whereby hee mighte seduce the reprobate, vpon whome by the iust iudgement of God the efficacy, and strength of error is sent, that they maye beleue lies whiche despised the tructhe. 2. Thessalo. 2. By this place wee gather that the wicked can not bustt forth into blasphemies againste God, at there pleasure, excepte God suffer, that they maye abuse there tongues, to there owne destruction. Moreover wee may here note that Antichrist carleth out nothinge, but great thinges, and blasphemies. For whatsoeuer they boast as magnificall, concerninge the dignitie of the Pope, his authoritie, keyes, swordes, and other prerogatiues of his, is meere blasphemie, by whiche he chalengerth to him selfe the place, and rowme of Christ ouer the Church yea all the whole Popelike doctrine, of the Sacrifice of the Masse, of Purgatorie, of Satisfactiones, workes of supererogation, and orher suche like monstres, contepneth infinite blasphemies.

And power was giuen vnto him to doe, two and fortie monethes. &c. This clause doth shew that Antichrist could
 not

reuelation of S. Iohn.

not obtayne rule in the worlde, but by the secret, & iuste iudgement of God. But this power is but within her limites, that hee can not raigne so long as he would, nor exercise his vngodlinesse, but his tyrannie is limited by 42. monethes. Concerning this number of monethes what I thinke is to be vnderstoode, I haue expounded in the 11. chap. Vers. 2. Here it shall suffice to note that this shorte space of halfe a weeke is put to the comfote of the godlye, that they should not feare. That the tyrannie of Antichrist should be eternall.

Vers. 6. And he opened his mouth vnto blasphemie against God to blasphemie his name his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heauen. &c.

Vhen the power of blaspheminge was once graunted, he opened his mouthe to manifolde blasphemies, for he spake contumeliously of God him selfe of his name, and of his tabernacle, and of those whiche dwell in heauen, so he counterth it not enough to reproch the maiestie of God onelye, but also his name that is the worshippe and religion whiche he hath prescribed to sanctifie his name, he cōdeneth as false, & hereticall, and koyneeth a new out to his owne bzayne. And also he blasphemeth the tabernacle of god, that is his Church, in which God dwelleth by his spirite, when he casteth it nothing else, but a conspiracie of heretiques and Schismaticques. wee may two waies take this of those whiche dwell in heauen, either for true members of the Church, whiche he with great reproche of them calleth Lutherans, & Zwinglians. &c. Or else for the saintes now triumphing in heauen whome he diuers waies sclaundereth either when he braggeth that they are the patrones of his wickednesse, or else condemneth their doctrine of error, or else when he doth erecte temples vnto the, Images, holy daies, and other diuine honors, making Idols of the holy worshippers of God: that I may not speake with what stinking lies he extollet there liues, in the geuing of marriage, and in suche kinde of wyltinges, whiche are all meere blasphemie againste the Sainctes, whiche dwell in heauen. And what reproches hee casteth forth againste God him selfe we haue touched before in the first verse.

And

Clers. 7. And it was geuen vnto him to make warre with the saincts
and to ouercome them, and power was geuen him ouer eue-
ry kindred and rounge and nation. &c.

He signifieth that Antichrist coulde doe nothinge, but in as
much as ability was permitted to him by God. In that ther
fore that he sheweth his cruelty vpo the holy martyrs of Christ,
he doeth it not at his owne pleasure, or at the will of the deuill,
for then woulde he utterly ertinguishe and destoye all the true
worshippers of God: but by the will of god, for a punnishment
of the reprobate, and a triall of his childezen, for whom it is very
profitable to be proued with sundry temptations. There is ge-
uen power to Antichrist to make warre againste the saincts, &
to afflict them with sundry tormentes vntill he may haue
the bolesfull victoery of many thousand of the being slaien. And
this tearing doth not rage in one region only, but euery where
throughe the whole earth, this is acatholique crueltye. And that
which we know partly by hystories, how many milians of mar-
tires were cruell murdered by the Emperozes and Romaine
Bishopes, we are partly taught by daily experience.

Clers. 8. Therfore all that dwell vpon the earth shall wor-
ship him, whose names are not written in the boke of life of the lambe
which was killed from the beginning of the worlde. &c.

Like as hee fore tolde in y verse going befoze that Antichrist
shoulde shew his cruelty vpon the bodie of the sainctes, so
in this verse he sheweth againste the soules of whome his false
illusions shall preuaile. That is to say against the reprobate en-
lye, which are not predestinate to eternall lyfe in Christ, whom
he calleth the lambe whiche was slaien from the beginning of
y worlde, because the strength and effect of this sacrifice, eue be-
fore he had taken fleshe profited the patriarches from the begin-
ninge of the worlde, like as it shalbe profitable to the elect euen
to the ende of the worlde. The reprobate therfore beinge sedu-
ced partly by his subtilties, and partly stricken with the cruelty
vsed against those that resist, will acknowledg his rule and au-
thority, and will worshippinge him in steede of a most filthy Idole.

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For his deceiptes and illusions shall not preuaile in any, but in those which perishe.

Uers. 9. If any man haue an care let him heare. &c.

He uttereth a matter woorthy of great consideration as ofte as he moueth attention with so earnest indēuour. We ought therefore with diligence to imprint thzoughly in oure mindes the doctrine which followeth to the hearinge whereof the holye ghost doth as it were by name calle euery one of vs.

Uers. 10. He that leadeth into captiuitie shall goe into captiuitie, he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword, here is the patience and the faith of the saintes. &c.

The law of repaying is decreed of the mighty God, for all tyrantes, and to those which oppresse the Church of God with cruelty. Eternall captiuitie abideth for those which haue led the the saintes captiues. They which haue slaiē the martyrs with the sword, shall be killed with eternall death, which is the sword of Goddes furie and wrath. And also god will haue certeyne signes of his iustice to remaine apparant in the world, that all men maye know that they shall not escape vengeance, whiche accordinge to the manner of beastes doe cruelly rage in madnes againste innocentes. Accordinge to that of the poet: few mighty cruell men descend to there graue without slaughter and blood few tyrants by drie death. For if we shoulde reckon vp of the Emperours, those whiche were the chiefe aucthors of persecutions, we shall finde that they were destroyed of God by diuers and sundry slaughters. Pero, Domitian, Decus, Valerianus Licinius, Julianus with many others, were slaiē with bloudy and cruell beate. Therefore the murtheringe of the saintes is not so permitted to Antichrist, that the Lords would leaue the same alwaies unreuenged. Here therefore the saintes haue neede of faith and patience, whiche followeth nexte, for excepte power were graunted to Antichrist to exercise his tyranny, what triall of faith should there be? what prose of patience? here therefore the saith and patience of the Saintes is to be loked for.

Uers. 11. And I beheld another beast comming out of the earth. &c.

who

NOW followeth the descriptiō of the other beast which cōfir-
meth the former beast, y we may know what instrument s
Antichrist vseth to the establisshing of his kingdome. For as
the Dragon with seuen heades hath for his vicare a beast with
seuen heades: so the beast with seuen heades hath this beast
with two hornes. He doth not expresse of what forme or sha-
pe this beast was, although it be certayne that he was a mon-
ster, bycause hee was borne out of the earth, that is of a moste
base and obscure beginning to the settinge forth of the king-
dome of Antichrist.

Which had two hornes like a Lambe. &c. He hath nothing
like to a Lambe besides his two hornes, in the rest of his bodie
deformed, vttering the nature of a wild beast. But some do ga-
ther by these hornes, that the pope is shadowed by this beast,
which chalngeth to him selfe the power of the kingdome, and
of the priesthoode, which as it is probable, so I do not see how
all thinges can surely agree to this exposition, which afterward
are often repeated of both the beasts. In my iudgment there-
fore others do rightelyer interprete him to signifie the popishe
clergie, whiche indenuour with all there strength, to maintayne
the dignitie of there Pope, these will haue somewhat like to
Christ, either when they boast them selues to be his seruants
or else when they chalendge to them selues bothe the seculer
and priestlye auctoritie. I speake of the chiefe Prelates, the
Cardinales, the Archbishops, and byshopes &c. which vsurpe
both a kingly and pontificall dignitie.

But hee spake like the Dragon. &c. Howsoever by the
number of his hornes hee seemeth to haue some outwarde
shewe, or likenesse of Christ, yet he betrayeth him selfe by his
voice that he is a preacher of the dragon and not of Christ. For
this beast, which afterward is called the false prophete, whose
doctrine if wee shall examine accordinge to the moste certayne
rule of Gods wooorde, it shalbe founde to bee Deuillish,
and quite contrarie to Gods trueth. That I maye omitte
other proofes, which are almost infinite, least I should be once

reuelation of S. Iohn.

reidous, that one testimonie of S. Paule in the first Epistle to Timothy and fourth chapt. calling the forbidding of mariage and meates, the doctrine of deuils, doth sufficiently proue that this false prophete, which teacheth y^e same thinges which the Pope prescribeth, doth speake the selfe same, whiche the great Dragon inspireth into Antichrist.

Uers. 12. And he did all that the first beast could do before him, &c.

The power of Antichrist is extended to his chiefe ministers therefore he exerciseth his power by them, this is y^e which he sayeth, that this beast with the two hornes did all that the first beast could do in his presence.

And he causeth the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast whose deadly wound was healed, &c. The popish clergie labour with tothe and naye, that all may euerie where acknowledge the auctoritie of the Bishop of Rome, and that all may require at his handes, Indulgences, dispensations, Empires and kingdomes, and manie yelde to him homage, which thing whiles they labour so studiously to bring to pas, they call backe againe, the aunciente tyrannie of the Etnikes, which being strikē with a deadly wound, now at length by there ayed hath bene perfectly healed.

Uers. 13. And both great wounders so that he maketh fire come downe from heauen on the earth, in the sight of men, &c.

Sainte Paule foretold that the coming of Antichrist should be in lying signes. Bycause also Christ him selfe prophesied that there should come false prophetes, which with workeinge monstrous myracles should deceiue manie, in so much that euen the verie electe if it were possible should also being seduced be drawne into there destruction. And heare the false prophete, as it were an apish imitator of Elias, cause the fire to descend from heauen vnto the earthe, in the sighte of men, all whiche are either fained to be done, or else by the craftie conueyaunce and iugling castes of Sathan, bewitching the eyes of men, they are but boasted of, of which sorte of Miracles the legens of the popish saintes are full. Yea those wonderfull thinges, which they worke by there counsels and auctoritie

in the commune wealeh, maye worthelye be counted for great signes and wonders, as when they translate kingdomes, fro the lawfull heires vnto others, some Emperours they depose, others they place in there rounnes, & other such like, which are wonderfull myracles to men. But we are admonished so often in the scriptures of signes, myracles, & wonders, which should be wrought by false prophets that we should not suffer our selues to be led backe from the tructh of Gods woorde by any workes, although they be neuer so wöderfull, against the tructh of which woorde we ought not to geue credite to Angels comming downe from heauen, to the Galath. Chapt. 1. Contrariwise it hath alwaies bene the maner of the false prophetes, to call and prouoke men from the woorde of God to myracles, and here vpon the papistes instantly require of vs to worke myracles, as though the doctrine, which we professe, were not sufficiently confirmed wiche infinite miracles of Christ and his Apostles.

Act. 14. And deceueth the that dwell on y^e earth, by meanes of those signes, which he hath power to do in y^e sight of the beast. &c.

He declareth in this verse to what end he wrought great signes before men verely that he mighte seduce the moste of the into errour. Such myracles therfore with the workers of the same are to be accursed of the faithfull by whiche they are called away from the simplicitie of Gods woorde to the deuises and inuentions of men. But it is worthy to bee noted, that he saith power was geuen him, that he mighte worke signes in the sight of the former beast. For god as S. Paule witnesseth will giue vnto them the efficacie and strength of errour, y^e they may credite lies, which would not beleue the truth 2. Thes. 2.

Sayinge to them that dwell on the earth that they should make the image of the beast, which had the wound of a sword & did liue. And this is y^e errour into which they seduced wretched men, that they should acknowledge the pope for God, or rather for an Idolle, and that they should set vp his Image for them selues to worship as if it were some God, but some vnderstand by the Image of the beast, that in the papacie is re-

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fores, a certain Image of the Romane Empire which was fallen to which opinion I would willingly subscribe, if the vision did not expresse that both the beast, and his Image were extant at one time. Adde moreouer that by the counsel and suggestion of this beast, an image of the first beast ought to be made of the inhabitantes of the earthe. Lastlye that this two horned monster, studieth by all meanes to aduance the dignitie of the first beast, but the pope setteth forth not the olde Empire of the Romanes to be worshipped, but him selfe. I expound this Image therefore to be the auctoritie of the pope, which all are commaunded to receiue at the handes of the popes clergy, being brought vnto them by his legates a latere, and to acknowledge it in the courts of Christianitie as they call them, in which the popes lawe is exercised, and the pope himselfe is chiefe iudge which power remainyng in the court or in the Legate a Latere, may of good right be called the Image of the pope. And that he repeateth so often that the deadly wound of his head was healed, it is that we may know that it is notwithstanding the same beast, although he somewhat differ in outward shew, which made so many slaughters of the martyres whose crueltie although for a time being restrained seemed as it were dead, at length reuiued to the exercising of the like or rather greater tyrannie.

Mark. 15. And he had power geuen him, to giue a spirite vnto the Image of the beast, so that the Image of the beast should speake and should cause that as many as would not worship the beast should be killed. &c.

HE alwaies repeateth that it was geuen him, that we maye vnderstand that euen the verie counsels & actions of y^e wicked are ordered by the will of god, and that the reprobate can do nothing at all, but that which god doth permitte. Moreouer least we should Imagen that this image here was dead, he addeth that a spirite was inspired into it of the beast being the priest thereof. So that the Image shoulde speake, that is the beast by his Legates, & other iudges of the papall court, which geue sentence according to the popes law, so that now we haue an Image not dumbe & dead, but which is liuing & speaketh,
we

we may note, how the tyrāny of the pope by litle & litle taketh increase for in the beginning, he onely allureth and seduceth by myracles, then he perswadeth the seduced to set vp an Image of the beast in euery citie, into which being set by he inspireth life & geueth power to speake, & lastly he cōmaundeth it to be worshipped vnder payne of death. For we know that it was counted worthe deathe, if any did contemne the power of the pope.

Uers. 16. And he made all both small & great, riche & poo &c. fre & bound to receyue a marcke in there right hand or in there foreheades.

Being not content to haue set forth the payne of death to all that should refuse to worship the Idoll of the beast, that is to acknowledge the auctoritie of the pope, he also bringeth all of what state or condition soeuer into bondage vnto him compelling euery one, euen as his bound slaues to receyue his marcke either in the right hand or in the forehead. By the right hand by which the actions and deedes of this life are guided and wrought, he signifieth, that in all doinges, whatsoeuer men of what state and condition so euer princes or priuate persons do take in hande, alwaies to the sea of Rome her prerogative is to be reserved, that nothing may by any meanes be decreed against that. And the marcke is imprinted in their forehead that alwaies and euery where they may testifie that they are slaues of that Apostolicall or rather Apostaticall sea.

Uers. 17. And that no man might buy or sell, saue he that had the marcke or the name of the beast, either the number of his name.

Lest any might escape by some subtiltie he appointeth this subiection that none coulde buye, or sell that is exercise any action necessarie, to the sustentation of this lyfe, but hee whiche would confesse him selfe to be subiecte to this power. And to conclude, a man must be banished oute of the world, excepte he would take vpon him this yoke of slavery and bondage. And he putteth thre things, his marke, his name, & the number of his name which pertyne all to one end, & they signifie that by some outward signe or ceremony, this seruitude is to be professed to all men, that hee maye acknowledge him selfe

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selfe to be a member of the latine Church whosoever leadeth his life within his Dominion.

Uers. 18. Here is wisdom: let him that hath wit count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man, and his number is six hundredeth, threescore, and sixe. &c.

Because this misterie was verie darcke, Saincte Ihon forewarneeth that here lieth wisdom hidde, but yet because it is the number of man, that is, whiche maye be counted by the wisdom of man and is not infinite, he prouoketh wise men which are endued with vnderstanding to number the same: for the number is six hundred, sixtie and sixe. I will omitte the most parte of the expositions, which are brought of this place, and I will bring forth that onely, which liketh me best, which Irenaeus affirmeth pleased many in his age, not long after this reuelation was receyued. which is, that *Λατρεω* is the name of the beast, the number of which name, of *γ* computation of the numerall letters amounteth to six hundred sixtie and sixe. whiche if it seemed to be true in the time of Irenaeus, muche more now vnto vs, seying the byshop of Rome in his common prayers, in his lawes, in his writings, in his faith is & wilbe counted a latine. Moreouer he ought to be a latine whosoever he be that will not be called a Grecian, that is a Schismaticke. So that rightlye in the verse going before the number of his name is also to be take for the marcke. Other do draw *γ* same number out of (*Ecclesia Italica*) the Church of Italie, which I do not reiecc, when as whether thou sekest the Church, or the head of the same, thou maiest finde either of them in the misterie of this number.





Ytis taught in this Chapter by what meanes the Church shall stand against the tyrannye of Antichrist, afterwarde the fall and ruine of vngodlines whiche shoulde be by the preachinge of the gospell, is foze tolde. The faithfull are admonished to take hede and kepe them selues from the corruptions and defilings of Antichrist, because the last iudgement of God shall shortly after follow.

¶ Ierl. 1. And I looked and beheld a lambe. &c.

When as he had foze tolde in the former Chapter that all tribes, tongues, people, and nations should acknowledge the auctorizty of y most foule beast, when as he had pronounced that the saintes should be ouercome of y most cruell monster, & also when he had foze shewed y all as many as wold exercise buying, and selling, & the trafficke of this life, should proffesse moste filthy slavery & bondage, we might very wel haue doubted, whether the whole Church of Christ, were vtterly subdued or not, after y the cruell beast had apprchended & obtained dominion, except in this vision, as well the preservation of the Church, as the destruction of that tyranny, had cosequently bene declared. Like as therefore in the 12. chap. he saw Michaell fighting w the dragon, so likewise now he seeth a lambe placed against the monstrous beast. But it seemeth to be without reason, that he opposeth and setteth a most meke lambe against a most cruell and wilde beast. But we must remeber, that Christ is shewed not such as he is to his enemies, but such as he vttereth himself to his owne. For to his enemies he is that Lion of the tribe of Iuda, but to the godlye he is the lambe slaien from the beginnunge of the woylde as loosing eto his owne, as he is terrible to his enemies.

¶ I stood vpon Mount Sion. &c.

Mount Sion is an auncient figure of the Church whiche shoulde neuer perithe, of whiche there remaine so excellent, and magnificall promises, that the Roysse will neuer forsake it. For oute of that place, the doctrine of the Gospell floweth ouer the whole woylde, according to the propheties of the olde Prophets, and accordinge to the comaundements of Christ

himselfe

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him selfe which he gaue to his Apostles. Act. 1. Ye shalbe witnesses vnto me in Ierusalem, and in all Iudea, and Samaria, and vnto the endes of the earth. That therefore, which mount Syon was to the Jewes, the same is the whole world, to vs, if we haue respect to place, wheresoener the godly professors of the Gospell are found. which the prophete I say witnesseth Chapter 2. Saying: and the mountayne of the house of the Lord, shalbe exalted aboue the toppe of all mountaynes and all people shalbe gathered vnto it. Fondly therefore doe they, which boast of some particuler citie or place, to which Church of God may be bound and tied, as the papistes doe of Rome, vnlesse they woulde vaunte as they are verie impudente, that mount Sion is translated to that citie, which is buylded vpon seuen hilles. But it is manifest by the scriptures that the seat of God is spread out of Sion ouer the whole earth. Therefore Christ is sayd to stand vpon the mount Syon, when he performeth that which he promised otherwhere: behold I am with ye, euen to the ende of the world: and if we aske where he answereth in the 17. Chapter of sainte Luke: wheresoener the dead carkas shalbe, thither will the Eagles be gathered. This place doth teach euen by this one reason, that the Church shall be perpetuall, because it is the seats of the lambe, whome the mount Sion shall neuer fayle, in which he may stand with his chaste worshippers.

And with him a hundreth and foure and fortie thousand. &c. The whole fellowship of Gods faithfull electe, gathered out of euery one of the 12. tribes of Israell, as we read in the seuenth Chapter, is ioyned to Christ there head. For wickednesse neuer beareth such sway in the world, but that God hath his sufficiente number althoughe muche fewer then the reprobate, which he preserveth pure frō Idolatrie, filthines, & defilinges, likewise as in the time of Elias he kept to him selfe seuen thousandes which were cleane and vnspotted from the filthinesse of Baall.

Hauiug his fathers name written in there foreheades. &c. That is, whose election is not onely sealed inwardly in there hartes

hartes by the holy ghost but also, with outward and open profession testified before men. For they witnesse by the whole conuersation of there life whose seruantes they are, so that it is ready and easie for euerie one, to read the name of god imprinted in there foreheades.

Reuel. 2. And I herd a voice from heauen. &c.

It is not an idle nor dumbe multitude whiche accompanie Christ, but which is alwaies bent with most earnest studye and indeuour in celebrating & magnifying his glory of god. **S.** Iohn therefore heareth a lowde voice from heauen: but it maye be meruailed wherefore it is layed from heauen, seeinge that he had scene the lambe a litle before standing on mount Zion. He signifieth therefore not an earthely hill, but that heauenly hill which is aunswereable, to the heauenly Ierusalem, for the conuersation of the Church beinge a straunger in earthe is in heauen.

As the sound of many waters and as the sounde of a great thunder, and I herde the voice of harpes harping with there harpes. &c. By a thre folde similitude he setteth forth his magnificence of the voice, which he herde. First that it was like to that bellowing noise, which many waters tossed with contrarie windes, and rushing against rockes, and the sea bankes, do make. This is a great confuse and troublesome sound, such at the first hearing, the voice of them that sing forth the praises of God in the Church seemeth to be. Secondly that voice was like to the crackes of the terrible thunder. For it striketh the mindes of sinners and specially of those, whiche are priuie of there owne vnthankfulnesse, when they heare the glory of god sounded forth, of his faithfull worshippers. Lastly when as the mindes of men are subdued and brought vnder to the obedience of god, and filled with the pleasaunt sweetenes of his amiable grace, they heare with great delight a most pleasaunte harmonie, as it were of harpers singinge with there harpes. This is the true musike, whose vse is in the Church rather then that chaunting, which creekech onely in the voice, and delighteth the ourwarde eares, when as neuerthelesse the minde
is void

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is boide of all sense or feling of godlinesse.

Uers. 3. And they song as it were a new song. &c.

So great is the ioyfull willingnesse of the godlye in setting forth Gods glorie, that when as nothing is moze aunciente in the Church then the celebration of diuine praises, yet they seme alwaies to them selues to sing a newe song. For the remembraunce of Gods benefites towardes them neuer wareth old, neither dothe the praise of God euer fayle in the Church, which alwaies indeuoureth with vntwined studie to magnify his glorie.

Before the throne, and before the foure beastes, and the elders. &c. That is, this exercise of singinge, doth alwaies flourish in the Church, before God, the Angels, and the whole worlde, which is both approued to God and testified to all his creatures.

And no man could learne that song, but the hundreth fortie and foure thousand, which were bought from the earth. &c. None of the reprobate, nor yet of the hypocrites, which sayne euen the most holinesse, coulde learne this song, but the electe onely, to whome the holy ghost is wont to speake and teach the same when as redemption is sealed in there hartes, & they may with ioyfull & sincere affectiō of harte, sing a psalm of thanks and praise vnto him, whome they acknowledge to be Abba and father. where are therefore the songes & prayers not vnderstode, which please God euē for the worke wrought as the papistes do mainteyn? For such songes euery hypocrite can learne and sing, but suche are not allowed of God.

Uers. 4.

These are they which are not defiled with women, for they are virgins. &c.

The conuersation of life is agreable to there profession. For they should not be meete to celebrate & praises of god, vnles they could bring the forth of a pure & vndefiled hart. But vnder one kinde, he comprehendeth all other defilings of a wicked life. They are free from whoredome, and other greater & moze beyonuse vices. Although accordinge to the maner of the scripture by whoredome we may vnderstande Idolatrie, & other vices

vices also whiche make a diuorcement betwene, Christ the onelie spouse of the Church, and men. For this is most precious virginitie before God, when the godlye kepe them selues cleane from adulterouse superstitions, and other defilinges of the worlde, like as god commendeth his seuen thousande, which were not defiled with any filthines of Baal. And Paule married the Corinthians, as a chaste virgin to Christ whiche woulde not suffer her selfe to bee drawne or led backe from Christ by wicked and counterseyte deuises of men, as it were with harlotlike enticementes. But in that the papistes by this place woulde confirme the single life of the popish clergy, it is without all reason. For y^e holy ghost doth not speake of euerie comminacion with women, but of that onely wherewith men are polluted, but the Apostle witnesseth in the. 13. chap. to the Hebrewes that y^e martage bed is vndefiled. Neither doth it make any thing for their purpose y^e they are called virgins. For this doth pertaine to the whole companie of the elect, & not to the ministers of the worde only, much lesse to the popish priestes, of which as there were manye y^e liued a single life, so there were very few of the virgins, yea scarcely there is one among a 1000. of the, but y^e he was defiled either to fornicatioⁿ, or preposterouse lust, or at the least wicked burning, so y^e if when we giue the single life, we may altogether deny them virginitie.

These followe the lambe whether soeuer he goeth. &c. The true members of the Church are neuer seperated from Christ their head, & the true worshippers of God do not departe the breadthe of a nayle from the side of Christ, hee is the shepheard, they are the shepe, therefore they follow the lambe wheresoeuer he shall leade them, if wee bee carefull therefore to finde oute the Church, let vs diligentely seeke Christ, not at Rome or Ierusalem, but in the Church spreade ouer the whole earthe.

These are bought from men being the first fruites vnto god & to the lambe. &c. If thou demande wherefore these haue

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so familiar access to Christ, the reason is reuered, because they are not of that lost lump of mankinde, but being redeemed from men, and from the most miserable and filthy bondage of the deuill, they are restored into the liberty of the seruens of God. And then he sheweth the ende of there redemption, when he saith y they are the first frutes to God, & to the lambe, we know y the first frutes were consecrated to God, that it was not lawfull for prophane men to touche them, the faithfull therfore are redeemed from the earth and from men, that they may serue God in holines and innocency, to the praise of his glozpe. We are admonished by this place how holily, and religiously innocency is to be imbraced of all the godly, when as they be certeyn, first frutes to God and Christ, not consecrate to our owne vse, neither to the vse of the woꝛld, oꝛ seruitude of sathan, but to the glozpe of God. Howeuer what horrible sacriledge it is to take from God and Christ there spise frutes, and to sacrifice them to the deuill the fleshe and the woꝛld.

Uers. 5. And in there mouthes was found no guile, for they are without spot before the throne of God. &c.

HE proceedeth in declaringe the puritie of those whiche are ioyned as companions to the lambe. For nothinge that is vnpure oꝛ corrupt can cleue to him. But it may seme contrary to all reason, that he seemeth to make them free from all spot of sinne and iniquity, which is y priuiledge of Christ alone, neither doth it agree to any other of the Sonnes of Adam. The comune sozte referre it to the infants that were cruelly slauen by Herod, which they call innocentes. But that is but a fond dreame, seinge this number comprehendeth all the elect, whiche are not blamelesse before God in their owne righteousness, but in as muche as that as lively members they sticke to Christ there heade.

Uerse 6. Then I saw an other Angel stye in the midst of heauen hauinge an euertlastinge Gospell to preache vnto them that dwell on the earth, and to euery nation, and kindred, toungue and people. &c.

Hetherto he hath expounded the figure of the church preserved out of the midst of the waves and starres of Antichristian persecu

persecutiō. Now he tourneth him to set forth the ruine and destruction of Antichrist. He seeth an Aungell therefore: flying through the midst of heauen openly and publikey bringing an euerlasting gospel, which is to be preached to the world. By which figure is signified that the light of the truth of the gospel, which semed long time obscured through the persecutions and darknes of Antichrist, by the singuler benefite of god, shold be restored againe to þ world, which excepte we see to be fulfilled in this our age, we are verie stones, & not men. For now, the Aungell which is the minister of god flieth, not in secret places and darcke corners, but through the midst of heauen, and he spreadeth that euerlasting gospel (which neuerthelesse the enemies crie out to be newe, and lately sprung vp) ouer the whole world, in spite of Satan, Antichrist & his adherentes, that it may now be truly sayd, which S. Paule taught to be agreeable to his time, there sound is gone forth into all the earth, & there woordes into the endes of the world.

Act. 7. *Saying with a lowde voice, feare God
and geue gloire to him. &c.*

The Aungell soundeth forth with a clear and lowde voice. That not Antichrist or his tyrannie, but that god alone is to be feared. And that honour is to be geuen not to Idols set vp by the subtiltie of the deuill, but to god onely. For many vnder the tyrannie of Antichrist departe away from the true worshippe of God, vnto deuillish superstitions, these the voice of the gospel doth admonishe to prides and offer to god alone due feare and obedience.

For the hower of his Iudgemente is come: and worshippe him that made heauen and earth, the sea and all the founteynes of waters. &c. Because the darkenesse is dyne away, and the light restored and all vngodlinesse is condemned, and the time will shortlye come, in whiche God will ascite all mankind before the tribunall seare of Christ, that euery one may receyue accordyng to that they haue done in there bodies. Therefore it is now no time, or place to dissemble, but the

A. 4.

verie

reuelation of S. Iohn.

verie aproching nere of Gods iudgement doth admonishe vs that all glorie and honour is due to him alone, whiche created all thinges by his will and hath appointed, and ordeyned his creatures for our vse, not onely the sea and the earth, in which his wonderfull power is shewed, but also the founteynes of swete waters in whiche his singuler goodnes doth shine. we are taught here, which is the voice of the true and euerlastinge Gospell, that we may distinguish the same from feyned, and counterfayt gospels, verely euen that which teacheth that god alone is to be feared, to him all glorie is to be given, him I saye is to be worshipped whiche is the onely creator of all thinges.

Uers. 8. And there followed an other Angell saying it is fallen it is fallen: Babylon that great Citie.&c.

When the Gospell is preached through the whole worlde, & the Church of Christ established in the fairthe of the same, then foloweth the fall and ouerthrow of the kingdome of Babylon. For the Babilonicall empire can not stand, when Christ once standerth by the defendour of his Church, whiche will bringe his Israelites out of most miserable bondage into freedom, and will call them out of banishment into there countrie the heauchily Jerusalem. By the fall therefore of Babylon, we vnderstande by the consente almost of all as well the olde as newe writers, the ruine and decaye of the Romaine tyrannie. For that which Babylon in the East was to the Jewes, the same is Rome, whiche is, Babylon, the west to the Christians. And as God compassed aboute and measured the crueltye of that olde Babylon within certeyne limites, so also the Lorde hath befoze appointed the ende of the Romaine tyrannie, althoughe the papistes boast that it shalbe eternall. And the holy ghost in these woordes alludeth to those thinges which are found in Ilay, & Ieremie concerning the destruction of Babilon. The dubling of these words, it is fallē, it is fallen, sheweth & certeyntie of her fall, for although she boast neuer so much & she is builded vpon a rocke, yet wout all doubt

Or

she shall fall, and although it be counted a great and famous ci-
tye, yet neuerthelesse it shall bee broughte into a deserte wilde-
nesse.

For shee gaue to all Nations to drincke the wine of the
wrathe of hir Fornication. &c. The cause is added, because
her wicked abominations are come to the full, because with her
wicked and blasphemouse doctrine she hath seduced all nations
to idolatrye, and he calleth it the wine of wrath, eyther because
it prouoketh the wrath of God, or els because it bringeth into fury
and madnes the wicked beinge made drunken there with, so
that they dote in folly vpon idols that is most filthy trumpets,
euen as though they were stricken with madnes. For god by his
iust iudgement hath sent vpon them the efficacy and strength
of erre. And we know how greedely the world hath anassed by
and stuffed it selfe with the doctrine of Antichrist, whiche is
nothyng els but a furiose wine of spirituall fornication, which
is the worshippinge of idols.

Acte. 9.

And the thirde Angell followed them sayinge
with a loude voyce. &c.

At length when wickednes is made manifest, and Antichrist
reueled, the faithfull are to be feared from his wicked opini-
ons, that they may not suffer them selues to be drawen into bon-
dage of him whose horrible fall and ruine, the holy ghost foretold
shoulde shortly after follow. Therefore the Angell crieth with
a loude voice, because many men geainge them selues to the de-
lightes and pleasures of Babylon, are so deafe to heare the voice
of the Gospell that they are scarcely raised by in the ende with
loude cryinge to repent and tourne from the filthynes of Anti-
christ. The Angell therfore which betokeneth the faithfull prea-
chers of the Gospell, denounceth horrible & eternall punishment
to all those which by any manner of meanes would professe ser-
uitude and bondage to Antichrist.

If any man worship the beast or his Image, and receiue his
marke on his fore head or on his hand. &c. Least any by hy-
pocrisy might fly and eschew the iudgment of God, as though he
worshipped not Antichrist from the heart, but from the teeth for

p. iij.

warde

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warde and in ourwarde ceremonie he numbereth all the kindes of that deuillish worship which is bestowed vpon the beast: Therfore whether any man do acknowledge antichrist himselfe or his auctoritie, or else professe him selfe by some outward badge or signe to be subiecte vnto him, he affirmeth that the same person shall be cursed and condemned to the eternall tormentes of hell.

Uers. 10. The same shall drinke of the wine of the wrath of God, pra the pure wine which is powred into the cup of his wrath. &c.

It is to be noted with what vehement figures he expreſſeth the horrible vengeance of God. For firste he calleth it the wine of Gods wrath, which if it, seme to little, he addeth, that it is pure, because it is not mitigated w any clemencie or gentleness, lastlye hee saith that it is powred into the cup of Gods wrath, so that by all meanes, he heapeth vp and increaseth the qualitie and quantity of Gods vengeance, against Idolaters and the boundslauers of Antichrist.

And he shall be punished in fire and brymestone before the holy Aungels and before the lambe. &c. The effect of Gods wrath is expreſſed, that it tormenteth them most gricuouselye whome it shall burne for euer with fire and brymestone before the holy Aungels and before the lambe, that they maye be punished in the presence or beholding of them whose fellowship, and whole some admonitions they despised whiles they liued. which parte of tormentes is not the lightest, that they are set as a gasing stocke for whome they mocked and derided whiles they flowed in there wanton pleasures and delights.

Uers. 11. And the smoke of their tormentes shall ascende vp euermore. &c.

He goeth forward in amplifying the unhappie estate of the reprobate for least they should flatter them selues that their tormentes should come to an end by any length of time, he sheweth that the smoke which riseth vp of there burning soules and bodies, shall ascend for euer, whereby all hope of deliuerance is taken quite awaye.

And they shall haue no rest day and night which worship the

the beast and his Image, & whosoeuer receyueh the printe of his name. &c. The calamities of manie, some litle consolation being intermedled, do graffe as it were a breathing time, but the miseries of these shall neither by day, nor by night feele any release or ease at all. So heauy is the wrath of god against those, which either make them selues subiecte to Antichrist, or else professe his seruitude by some externall and outwarde signe. It is meruaile that the false richodemites, and other which remaine among the papistes, are not altogether stricken with horrour & feare, if at the least they weygh & consider, but euen with indifferēt mindes þ grieuousenes of this iudgmēt.

Uers. 12. Here is the patience of the sainctes here are they which kepe the commaundements of God and the faith of Iesus. &c.

This seemeth ouer harde to the fleshe that they whiche for a time through feare of crueltie yelded them selues to Antichrist, are to be committed to euerlasting tormentes. But the Angell answereth, that here is a place for the patience of the sainctes, whiche oughte to bee proued by afflictions as goulde is tried in the fire. That here the true worshippers of God are distinguished from hypocrites, for then is the obedience of the godly seene and perceyued, when as they can not neither by threateninges or promisses be moued or drawne awaye frō the obedience of God. Moreover that here is place for faith, when as the faithfull being bent and fixed vpon one God, do not only flye & eschew all the delights & pleasures of þ world as it were inticing meremaydes, but also will suffer stronge, the most exquisite and grieuous tormentes which tyrants lay vpon them, rather then that they will slide from the true & sincere worshipp of God, to the prophane superstitions of Idolatry.

Uers. 13. And I herde a voice from heauen saying vnto me, write blessed are the dead, which dye in the Lord, euen so saith the spirit, that they rest from their labours, and there workes followe them. &c.

Like as the Angell threatned horrible punishment to Antichrist and to those that worshipp him, so. It behoueth the mindes of the faithfull to be lifted vp by some consolation

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Uers. 12. Here is the patience of the saintes here are they which kepe the commaundments of God and the faith of Iesus. &c.

This seemeth ouer harde to the fleshe that they whiche for a time through feare of crueltie yeldded them selues to Antichrist, are to be committed to enerlasting tormentes. But the Angell answereth, that here is a place for the patience of the saintes, whiche oughte to bee proued by afflictions as goulde is tried in the fire. That here the true worshippers of God are distinguished from hypocrites, for then is the obedience of the godly seene and percepued, when as they can not neither by threateninges or promisses be moued or drawne awaye fro the obedience of God. Moreover that here is place for faith, when as the faithfull being bent and fixed vpon one God, do not only flye & eschew all the delightes & pleasures of this world as it were inticing meremaydes, but also will suffer stronglye, the most exquisite and grievouse tormentes which tyrants lay vpon them, rather then that they will slide from the true & sincere worshipp of God, to the prophane superstitions of Idolatrye.

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warde and in outwarde ceremonie he numbereth all the kindes of that deuiliſh worſhip which is beſtowed vpon the beaſt: Therefore whether any man do acknowledge antichriſt himſelfe or his authoritie, or elſe profeſſe him ſelfe by ſome outwarde badge or ſigne to be ſubiect vnto him, he affirmethe that the ſame perſone ſhalbe curſed and condemned to the eternall tormentes of hell.

Clert. 10. The ſame ſhall drinke of the wine of the wrath of God, pre the pure wine which is powred into the cup of his wrath. &c.

It is to be noted with what vehement figures he expreſſeth the horrible vengeance of God. For firſt he calleth it the wine of Gods wrath, which if it ſeme to little, he addeth, that it is pure, becauſe it is not mitigated w any clemencie or gentleneſſe, laſtlye he ſaith that it is powred into the cup of Gods wrath, ſo that by all meanes, he heapeth vp and increaſeth the qualitie and quantity of Gods vengeance, againſt Idolaters and the boundſlaues of Antichriſt.

And he ſhall be puniſhed in fire and brymeſtone before the holy Aungels and before the lambe. &c. The effect of Gods wrath is expreſſed, that it tormenteth them moſt grievouſely whome it ſhall burne for euer with fire and brymeſtone before the holy Aungels and before the lambe, that they maye be puniſhed in the preſence or beholding of them whole fellowſhip, and whole ſome admonitions they deſpiſed whiles they liued. which parte of tormentes is not the lighteſt, that they are ſet as a gaſing ſtocke for whome they mocked and derided whiles they ſloured in there wanton pleasures and delights.

Clert. 11. And the ſmoke of their tormentes ſhall aſcende vp euermore. &c.

He goeth forward in a multiplying the unhappie eſtate of the reprobate for leaſt they ſhould flatter them ſelues that their tormentes ſhould come to an end by any length of time, he ſheweth that the ſmoke which riſeth vp of there burning ſoules, and bodies, ſhall aſcend for euer, whereby all hope of deliuerance is taken quite awaye.

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tion, that they may with the more indifferēt mindes be able to sustaine and indure the persecutions moued against them by *Aurichrist*. So. *Thou* therefore herde the voice of the holy ghost from heauen sounding alowde, and promising eternall blessednesse to all as many as shall suffer deathe for the *Lords* cause. And the circumstances of this place are worth consideration. This voice is herde from heauen, that the testimonie might be more notable and manifest and that we ought to geue more diligent heede to the same, bycause it bringeth a rare and vnrwarded matter of comfort and consolation. Moreover hee is commaunded to write as it were some certeyne oracle farre excellēg the rest, for he was commaunded in the beginning to write whatsoeuer he shoulde heare or see, which commaundement beinge here repeated, declareth that this is an excellent voice, which neuer ought to slippe out of our mindes. And he is not content to promise happinesse to the soules departed, excepte also he confirme the same with an othe, and vehemente affirmation, and he sheweth who it is which promiset this happinesse vnto them verely euen the spirite of tructh which deceyuet no man, and lastly he addeth the reasons or causes wherefore he pronounceth them to be blessed. First bycause they are drawne out and deliuered from the laboures and miseries, to which this life is subiect. And secondlye that they receyue the most ample rewarde, which is ordeyned and appointed by the free mercie of God, for there good workes. There is no cause therefore that we should sorrow for there deathe, whiche as it bringeth an ende of present euils, so likewise it is the beginning of eternall felicitie. And though he chiefly speaketh here of martires, which are slayne for the testimonie of *Christ*, yet it is not to be doubted, but that those thinges are to be referred to the ende of all the godly, which the holy ghost here preaceth of *happines* after their deathe. Therefore away with *popes* fire of purgatorie, in whiche the soules doe not rest from there laboures, but are tormented with the paines of hell, if we may belene the papistes: as those, whome not there owne workes do accompanie, but the merites of others do a long time after followe

them. which is playnely a doctrine of deuils, which was denied to set vp and maintayne a verie bucherlie torment of conscience, and is not a doctrine of the holy ghost set forth to the comforte and consolation of the sainctes.

Uers. 14. And I looked and beholde a white clowde, and vpon the clowde one sitting like vnto the forme of man, hauing on his head a golden crowne, & in his hand a sharpe sickle. &c.

After that he had described the state of the Church, of what sort it should be, euen vnto the ende of the world, nowe he foresheweth that the vtter destruction of the wicked shall come at length, by the last iudgement of God. And that is shewed by two figures, the one of harvest the other of gathering grapes. Either of them is repeated in faine sense among the prophetes, but chiefly of Iſay, in the 17. 63. Sainct Iohn therefore seeth a white clowde and a certayne Angell sitting vpon the clowde in the shape & likenes of a man. The clowde is a foreteller of the iudgement because the Lorde will come in f clowdes of heauen. This Angell clothed with the shape of man representeth Christ, or at the least wise is a minister of his iudgement. He hath a golden crowne vpon his head that wee maye vnderstand that kingly auctoritie is committed to him of god. The sharpe sickle which he carrieth in his hande, expresth the seueritie and sharpenes of his iudgement, whiche none of the wicked can eschew, which all the attemptes of the reprobate can no more resist, then the ripe corne can the sickle of the reaper.

Uers. 15. And an other Angell came out of the temple crying with a lowde voice to him that sat on the clowde, thrust in thy sickle and reape. for the time is come to reape, for the corne of the earthe is ripe. &c.

The former figure of the Angell sittinge vpon the white cloud shewed that the iudgement of Christ is prepared, but this figure of the other Angell comminge oute of the temple teacheth that the time is at hande, in which God will take vengeance vpon the reprobate. Wee goeth forth of the temple, that is, from the presence of God him selfe, opening his secrete counsell: for as kinges doe dwell in palaces, so God is sayed metaphorically, to dwell in a temple, hee admonisheth

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the Aungell therfoze which bare the sickle, whiche wayted dayly foꝛ the will and pleasure of God, that now at length that daye is come, in whiche all wickednes beinge ouerthowen, the gloꝛy of God may perfectly shine, and they may be punnished, whiche he therto haue disdained to magnify and set foꝛth the same gloꝛy. If any thinke it an absurderye, that Chꝛist is admonished by the aungell, he must know that these hid mysteries are shewed and reuealed by fygures, so farre as oure vnderstandinge could comprehend them, when as Chꝛist also him selfe, in as muche as hee was man, confesseth that the day of iudgment was hid from him. Here also not Chꝛist himselfe, but an Aungell representinge the iudgement of Chꝛist is brought in.

Act. 16. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped. &c.

THere is no delaye, so soone as he vnderstandeth that the ripe & full time to exercise the seuerity of god is come, his sharpe sickle being thrust into the earth, he reapeth all the harueste of the earth, sooner then one woꝛde can be spoken.

Act. 17. Then another angell came out of the temple which is in heauen hauinge a sharpe sickle. &c.

It may be demaunded what neede there shoulde be to vse two figures, seeinge that foꝛmer of the coꝛne reaped might suffice. We may aunswere to this that in the foꝛmer fygure is expꝛessed that generall chaunge of all as well of the godly, as of the reprobate, which shall be in the last day, and that in the latter figure the destruction onely of the reprobate is described: foꝛ Chꝛist him selfe compareth the ende of the woꝛld to an haruest, the aungels to reapers, but because in the haruest there are not onely tares, but also wheat, whiche when it is purged from the tares, is to be laied vp in the barn, and in this place, the purpose of the holie ghost is chiefly to comprehend the ruine of vngodlines, therfoze omittinge the haruest, by the figure of gatheringe the grapes he proponneth and setteth foꝛth foꝛ vs to behold the horrible destruction oꝛ ende of y^e wicked. Wherefoze there goeth foꝛth of the heauenly temple, an other angell then y^e foꝛmer, which sitting vpon the cloude did exercise the generall iudgement of all men, and he also bearing a sharpe sickle, in which he is ready to streache
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for the the vengeance of god against the reprobate when it seemeth good to þe lord him self. And he goeth out of þe temple which is in heauē. as he which hath receyued fro þe mouth of god him selfe the commaundement which he was prepared to execute.

Uers. 18. And an other Angell came out from the altar, whiche had power ouer fire and crieth with a lowde voice to him that had the sharpe sickle & saied thrust in thy sharpe sickle & gather þe clusters of the vineyarde of þe earth, for her grapes are ripe.

Whiles that former Angell armed with the vengeance of god going forth of the temple, onely waited for the will & pleasure of the lord, what time he ought to execute þe office committed vnto him, beholde there goeth forth an other Angell fro the heauenly altare, bringinge the commaundement of God, that the time to gather grapes was come for nowe the clusters of the vine of the vngodlinesse are ripe, which the lord hath commaunded straitway to be cut downe. Wither to these thinges are cleare and manifest enough. But wherefore is he said to go forth from the altare? verely in my Iudgement he alludeth to the foyme of the olde temple in whose innermost rowne was the golden altare aboue, which was the arcke of the couenant, aboue the arcke were the Cherubines betwene which the lord dwelled sacramently & vnder a figure. He signifieth therefore, þe secret counsell of god, which at length shalbe made manifest, this commaundement came forth concerning the taking away of the reprobate, they shall take away sayed Christ out of the kingdome of God all thinges þe offend, & them that worke iniquitie. Mat. 13. But it is much moze darcke þe he saierth, that this Angell hath power ouer fire. Some do therefore interpret him to be Christ, which came to send fire into the earthe. Others do expound it a fierie affection wherewith þe Angels burne, to destroy the vngodly. But seeing I. Iakle, to þe. Eph. 1. chap. And likewise Collos. 1. calleth certen angels powers, I do simplie vnderstand þe here is meint þe angell which by the dispensation of god hath rule ouer þe element of fire. Like as also we here afterward in the 16. chap. The Angell of þe waters. For god hath disposed to Angels the preservation of the creatures of the worlde, whiche we finde often times witnessed in

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in the scriptures here therefore the Aungell whiche hath power ouer fire is sent, that it might be signified with what kind of destruction the Lord hath decreed to chaunge the forme of the worlde, whereof no man is ignorant. But we may learne by this place, that the due & as it were ripe time to take vengeance vpon the reprobate, is not to be discerned, at our will but by the most secret iudgement of God: because it becometh not vs to p̄fixe the time but patiently to wayt for the same.

Alf. 19. And the Aungell thrust in his sharpe sickle on the earthe, and cut downe the grapes of the vineparde of the earth, and cast them into the great wine fat of the w̄rath of god.

Now there followeth the execution of Gods decree vpon the reprobate, in which this is to be obserued, that firste the braunches or clusters are cut downe, that is, the vngodly are spoiled and bereft of all there ornaments and strength, in which they were proude, and after being naked, as it were rotten grapes they are cast in to the great wine fat of Gods w̄rath to be troden downe.

Alf. 20. And the wine fat was troden without the citie, and bloud came out of the wine fat, euen vnto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and sixe hundred furlonges. &c.

How sharpe so euer the w̄rath of God be vpon the wicked reprobate, the punishments shall not come nighe the elect for without the holie citie, and heauenly Ierusalē, is the wine fat troden, in which the wicked are tormented, whose bloude issucth and floweth out of the fat, euen vnto the horse bridles. and that by a verie great space of ground. Shewing what a horrible & wonderfull slaughter the lord will make of wicked, whē the due time of punishment shall come. Concerning the number of the furlonges, they make two hundred miles, which was almost the greatest length of the land of Canaan, which represented the whole worlde, besyde Ierusalem that is the Church.



When as he had foretolde in the Chap. going let the that extreme punishments shold be taken upon the wicked in the last iudgment of God, we mighte haue doubted whether they shoulde quietly triumphe or not vntill that time and shoulde not in the meane time be chastised with any scourges of God. The holy ghoste therefore teacheth in this chapter, and also in the chapter followinge, that like as the last destruction remaineth for them in the last iudgment of god so also in the meane time the Lord would be reuenged vpon there wickednes, with diuers and mooste greuous punishments.

Act. 1. And I saw an other signe in heauen great and meruaile, seuen Angels hauinge the seuen last plagues, for in them is fulfilled the wrath of God. &c.

Since that nothinge is moze vsuall to the woꝛlde then to ascribe the plagus sent of God, to fortune or to some other seconde causes: John sheweth that a certeine greate and wonderfull signe was shewed to him, with whiche it behoueth the mindes of men to be earnestly stroken with the feare of Gods iudgements: that is seuen Angels byinginge the wrath and vengeance of God from heauen vnto the earth. Therefore the diuers kindes of punishments are sent doone from heauen vpon the reprobate, and chieflly vpon the body of Antichrist, not by any blinde atuenture of fortune, but by the sure and determine counsel of God, and he saith seuen plagues, because by vngodly shall be stricken of God for there sundry and very many heynouse offences, not with one kind of calamities, but with diuers, not with few, but with very many plagues, euen as the number seuen signifieth vniuersality and fulnes. Moreover he calleth them the last plagues, because in them the wrath of God is finished, that is doth powre oute it selfe wholly to the destruction of those whiche beinge admonished, by no chastisements would be brought to a better minde. But rather loke how much moze they were chastised of God with punishments, so much the moze they were hardened against all calamities.

And

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Apoc. 17. And I saw as it were a glassie sea mingled with fire and them that had gotten the victorie of the beast, and of his Image and of the number of his name, stand at the glassie sea &c.

GOD doth neuer prepare punishmentes againste the reprobate, but y^e first he prouideth for his owne, least they should be drawne into destruction together with the wicked. whiche thing is clerely described by this figure, for befoze the seuen Angells powze out the vials full of gods wrath vpon the earthe, to terrifie the wicked, and the inhabitantes of the great citie, &c. Ihon seeth the holy worshippers of GOD had kepte them selues free from the most filthy bondage of Antichrist, first placed in safetie, least any litle parte of the seuen plagues might touch them. We seeth therfore a glassie sea mingled with fire, that is the greatnes of perils and troubles to which the godly are subiecte in this world, whiche is so great that it may be compared to a sea, for the vnumerable hugeness, and it is bitter with so harde and sharpe persecutions thatt someth all to burne with fire, and yet it is as harde as glasse, so that the faithfull may be tossed to and fro, but they can not be drowned in it, for Ihon beholdeth those, which by the benefite of GOD haue overcome, euen in the most difficulte and harde battell incountred with y^e beast, that is with Antichrist and all his impietie, standing ioyfully at that glassie sea, as it were deliuered from shipwreake or free fro drowning singing a song of victorie to GOD there deliuerer, with all sincere affection of harte. we may here note, that we must strine and fighte with Antichrist, if we desire to be garnished with the rewardes of conquerers. Moreover in that the beast, his Image, his marke and the number of his name are so often repeated, we oughte to haue no fellowship or agreement with Antichrist, or with any litle portion of his deuilliske superstition. But we muste fight not onely against the beast him selfe, which is the Pope, but also against his Image, that is his lawes and decrees, by which his wicked authoritie and pride hath bene founded and established, and against his marche, y^e is the ceremonies which he hath inuented and founde out, to leade soules captiue into

his filthy flauerie & bondage. And lastly we must fight against the number of his name that we may hate with like hatred as himselfe, whatsoeuer may be called by his name.

Hauing the harpes of god. &c. The holy ghost doth signifie by this metaphoz, that matter of ioy and gladnesse is dayly ministred of god to the godly, which neuer leaueth of to heape his benefites vpon them, that although they seme to be y^e most wretched and miserable of all others in the eyes of the world, yet they feele and perceyue them selues to be happie, so that being ioyfull and glad they sing hymnes, and psalmes to god, with the harpe. we are taught here that we are vnnecte, or vnapt to celebrate the glory of god, excepte we receyue oure harpes, of him by the most swete harmonie of which being helped we may recorde the heauculy and diuine songes.

Act. 3. And they song the song of Moses the seruante of God.

By cause they acknowledge it to be no lesse benefite, that they are deliuered from the dangerouse waues of the fiery sea, that is the world, then that in time past god led the Israelites safe throughe the red sea: they sing to god there deliuerer that noble song, which Moses the principale seruante of god taught the people of Israel, as we read in the fiftenth Chap. of Exodus: let vs sing to the Lord for he hath triumphed gloriously, and so as foloweth. Let vs learne here, not to esteeme y^e power and mercie of god in protectinge and defendinge his sanctes from the wicked defilinges and other infinite dangers of this world, to be lesse, then in those auncient & wonderfull workes by which he deliuered the olde patriarches fro the euils which hanged ouer there heades. whose examples are therefore set forth, that we may hope that god wilbe suche to vs in our afflictions, as we helcue, he was to the olde fathers, and that we may offer vp our selues and become such in pierte and thankfulness as we read those holy men shewed them selues for the benefites which they receyued.

And the song of the lambe. &c. Seeing the faithfull haue Christ both the onely aucthor and mediator of there redemption, they do not onely sing the song of Moses, but also toge-
ther

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ther therewith they singe a moste sweete and pleasaunte songe taught by the lambe him selfe. For that which Moses was to the Israelites, that same and much more gloriose is Christ to his Church.

Great and meruailouse are thy workes, Lord God almightie. &c. This is that magnificall song taught to the Church by the Lambe, that is drawne oute of the Doctrine of Christ our sauoure, whiche songe doeth ascribe all praise, honour, and glorie, to one God almightie. Of whome therefore shall we belene that the most parte of the papisticall or popish hymnes and songes were taught, which are framed to celebrate the glorie not of God the creatour, but of the creatures, of which sort are these, hayle quene of heauen, hayle, starre of the sea, hayle triumphing crosse, hayle mother Anna, and manie other of the same stuffe, which are also fraught full of most horrible blasphemies: The lambe neuer taught these songes, but that monstrous beast, which hath nothinge like to the lambe, but his two hornes. Here also we haue a most clear & liuely image of the true worship of God in the Church, verely where all thinges do sound to the praises of God onely: on the contrarie parte, that it is the sinagoge of Sathau, Wherefore the glorie is magnified of any other, besides the glorie of the true and one onely god. Moreover in that the faithfull do acknowledge the workes of God to be great & meruailouse, they teach vs how his benefites are to be esteemed. For the deuill studieth by all meanes to diminish the dignitie of them, therefore hee perswadeth vs by his suggestions, that they are small & common workes, which god exerciseth daylye, either in protecting & godly, or restraining the wicked. when as in y^e meane while, but that we are altogether blind euen in the midst of y^e clear lighte, and deprived of all right iudgement, they are great and wonderfull. They are great because no man, or any other creature can do the like. They are meruailouse because besides all hope and opinion of men they take there effecte, yea though Sathan and all his garde of soldours resist and wastle against the same. (Lord god almightie) god alone bycause he

can do all thinges, hath wrought and brought to passe verie great and wonderfull woꝝkes, as ofte therfore as the ende and finishing of our matters seemeth hard, let vs tourne our eyes to the soueraigne rule and power of God, for all thinges obey his will. And let vs leane and permitte that to his counsell, which semeth hard, or impossible vnto vs.

Iust and true are thy waies, kinge of Sainctes. &c. The woꝝkes of God are not onely great and wonderfull, but also iust and true are all things whatsoeuer he doth. For if he chasnice the offences of any with plagues he doth it by Justice and righte beeing the Iudge of the whole worlde neither dothe he at any time punish the innocent for those which are guiltie. If verely he shew him selfe fanourable and gentle to his seruantes, he doth it for his infinite mercies sake, which he hath promised he will powre forth vpon those, which worship him with sincere and earnest affection and loue of godlynesse. Neither will he kepe backe any parte of those thinges, whiche he hath promised to his Church untill at length he shall adorne the same with eternall felicitie. What they call God king of the Sainctes, they shewe that they acknowledge the governance of him alone, to whose kingdome so long as they be subiecte they neede not to be afrayed of any tyranie of Sarhan, or wicked me. Lastly we are taught who are woꝝthy the honorable name of Sainctes, verely euen they whiche acknowledge God to be there king, and as it becommeth subiectes, do obey his hollosome lawes and most holy decrees.

Act. 4. who shall not feare thee O Lorde, and glorify thy name. &c.

They Iudge it a matter of all other most absurde and withoute reason that the wicked bringe voide of all feare of God, doe contemne and despise the glorie of his name. For when as his woꝝkes are so great and wonderfull, and of such power that no strength can resist him, seeing his Iudgements are Iust, so that none of the wicked can eschew his punishments due for his sinnes, who shall not feare him, excepte he be as

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a blocke endued with no sence at all : and seing he is of so great benignity and gentlenes towards those that feare him, so that he adzorneth them dayly with all kinde of benefits, who will not study and endeavour to celebrate the Glorý of his name excepte he be noide of all shadow of bertne and humanitie.

For thou only art e holy. Here of they conclude that all feare and hono ure is due to God alone, because he onely is Holýe. All other thinges are wicked and Prophane excepte those to which he doth communicate his holines. Doe we not here acknowledge one of the blasphemouse names of Antichrist that he suffereth himselfe to be called most holýe, when as God onely is holýe. Neither is that inough, except also he shoulde challenge to himselfe this dignitie, that the holýnes of the whole Church shoulde depende bypon him, and that hee can poure a new holines into those creatures whiche it pleaseth him, and to be shorfe, that he claimeth the Canonizinge of deade Sainctes as they terme it to pertaine onelye to him. Whereto doe these thinges tende : but that he mighte robbe God of this prerogative of holines, and with greate Sacriledge transfer it to himselfe.

And all nations shall come and worshiþe before thee. &c. He signifieth that the wicked do strine and resiste in vaine, because will they, will they, at length they shall acknowledge his rule and government.

For thy iudgements are made manifest. &c. Whiles the iudgements of god are secret, it semeth somewhat to be borne withall, if they feare not his iudgementes, whose severitie they are ignorant of, but when as the Iudgements of God are made open, and most cleare and manifest examþles are daylye set before there eyes, it argueth more then a stony hardnes of the reprobate, that they are mollified with no scourges of God, and taught by no experimenter, that they may learne to feare God, and that they may þelde due glorý to his moste holy name.

After 5. And after that I looked, and beholde the temple of the tabernacle of witness was open in heaven. &c.

After

After that he had set the Church of Christ free from those plagues, which were prepared to punish the wicked he retourneth now to the former narration, shewing after what manner the Angels proceeded, which had the seven last plagues. The temple of the tabernacle of witness (saith he) was open in heauen, by which figure we are taught that the horrible plagues should rise up in the world not rashly, or by chaunce, for these Iudgements come for the of, the innermost secrete of Gods will. For he alludeth to the foyme of the olde tabernacle out of the innermost rowme whereof, answers were given to those that asked.

Revel. 6. And the seven Angels came out of the temple, which had the seven plagues clothed in pure and bright linnen and hauing there breastes girded with golden girdles. &c.

They proceede from the will of God euen all the ministers of his Justice and severitie, clothed in linnen garments, pure and bright, that they might signifie the sinceritie and equitie of his Iudgemente. For the wrath of God doth neuer rage against the innocente, but it is inflamed against the wicked contemners of all Ungodlinesse. Whoeuer they are girded with golden girdles, that they maye shewe how ready they are with all diligence to execute the ministrie committed vnto them. Suche diligence which is figured by the girdle is in so great price and estimation with God, that it garnisheth and adorneth those blessed Spirites more then golde, or precious stones. Princes and Magistrates must imitate and follow this diligence, to whome god hath deliuered the sword into there handes, that they maye be readie to exercise vengeance vpon the wicked transgressours of godes lawe, nor to let there sword gather rust in the scaberd, and the godly in the meane time bee oppressed by the number and iniuries of the wicked.

Revel. 7. And one of the foure beastes came vnto the seven aungels seven golden vials, full of the wrath of God, which he liueth for euermore.

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WE haue expounded the beastes befoze by conferring them with the vision of Ezekiel, to be Cherubicall Angels, which governe the creatures of the world. The sense therefore is, that the creatures of God created to the vse and seruice of men, do minister scourges and punishments to be taken vpon the reprobate against whome all euen the most contemptible creatures of the world are armed. These vessels conuey a certain measure of Gods Iudgements, which seeme good to his counsell to be powred forth in there seuerall tournes. And they are golden, that is precious, because they set forth the glorie of God in his Justice. Lastly they are sayed to be full of the wrath of god which liueth for euer, whose wrath against the reprobate is vnappceable & eternall, not for fury of some mortall creature, which though it be not appeased whiles he liueth, yet by his death it is finished and hath an end. Farre other is the fatherly correction of god, by which he chastiseth his children for a time against whome his wrath doth not long time, or much waxe hotte, but by and by, so that they repent, he re- tourneth in to fauour with them, and becommeth merciful and graciouse vnto them.

Next. 8. And the temple was full of the smoke of the glorie of God, & of his power and no man was able to enter into the temple till the seven plagues of the 7. Angels were fulfilled. &c.

Here is described howe great is the maiestie, and power of God when he hath decreed to shewe forth the same, and that by no meanes access is open vnto him, so long as his fury waxeth wrath against the wicked. Not that he rageth like an angry man, which being incensed against the euill, doth without reason or difference strike the good also comming next to hand, but because, when he taketh vpon him the person of a Just Iudge no sinfull flesh can stande befoze him, except with the voice of clemencie and mercie he callerh vs vnto him being verie fearefull, and trembling.



He doeth in this Chap. With what
plagues and scourges the Lorde would strike
the kingdome of antichrist before the last inter
throw and bitter destruction of the same; leaue
they shoulde alwaies please the felues securely
in their delights and pleasures, and deride and
scorne the calamities of the Church.

Act. 1. And I heard a great voice out of the temple, saying to the
seven Angels, goe your waies, poure out the seven vials of
the wrath of God vpon the earth. &c.

The seven Angels stode gydded about holdinge the vials ful
of Gods wrath which were committred vnto them, yet they
dare not poure them out, butill that beeing admonished by the
heauenly voice, they knew that the time for that had come
was at hand.

Asinge onto of
the Angels w
wrath into & ear
God in all thing
praye continuall
Beholde here an
whereof we oug
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uen into enery o
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at once, wherupon we vnderstand that rare and vndoubted pla
gues were to be cast vpon the reprobate.

Act. 2. And the first angell went and pored onto his viall vpon the
earth: and ther fell a noisome & grievous soze vpon & men which had
& marke of & beast & vpon the which worshipped his Image.

Dij.

The

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the wrath of God vpon the earth. &c.

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of Gods wrath which were committed vnto them, yet they
dare not poure them out, but till that being admonished by the
heavenly oracle, they knew that the ripe time for that bulnes
was at hand. Wherefore the voice of Almighty God is heard thus
sayinge out of that temple of his holines, whiche commaundeth
the Angels with speede to poure forth the vials full of Gods
wrath into y^e earth. Let vs learne here to waite for the voice of
God in all thinges before we take any thinge in hande. We be
prayer continually, thy will be done in earth as it is in heauen.
Beholde here an example of angelicall obedience, to the rule
whereof we oughte to frame our obedience. The Angels are
first called forth of y^e temple, they appeare straightway carefully
waitinge what the Lord would commaunde them: there is gi-
uen into enery of their handes vials, that is power to exercise
the iudgements of God against the Antichristian wickednes,
which thinge although they desyre speedely to dispatche, yet they
tary the time prefixed and determined by God. Moreover we
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y^e marke of y^e beast & vpon the which worshipped his Image.

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The seven plagues as we noted also before, signifie in generall all the calamities, which God woulde sende vpon the kingdome of Antichrist, before that Christ should sea the man of sinne himselfe with the breath of his mouth. And of those certeine are vsuall scourges of God, with which he is accustomed to afflict and punish the worlde for sinne, as pestilence, warre, famine, contagious and sharpe diseases, which are signified, by pourceing forth the foure first vials. And certeyne are ordeined peruliously to beat downe the tyzanny of Antichrist it selfe, which are described in the thre other vials. That which concerneth the former, because the tyzanny of Antichrist may worthily be compared to the bondage of Egypte, the holy ghost doeth denounce the like punishments by an allegory to the plagues of the Egyptians. For this city is spirituallly called Egypt, as we read before in the 11. chap. The first Angell therfore poured forth his viall vpon the earth, and there followed a noisome & greuous soze vpon the men which possessed the bondage of the deail, & the world acknowledge his authoritie. And this plague representeth the first plague, whereto god stroke the rebellious Egyptians by Moses, as we read Exo. 9. this plague signified, pestilence, sores, & specially the French pockes to which the popes cardinals, bishops & all the begges of the popish clergy are chiefly afflicted, whose vngodlines god both daily reuenging to sundry & vniacustomable kinds of diseases. And histories do testifie how often the pestilence hath deuoured, at Rome in Italy, in spaine, in france, & sometime throughout all Europe, as large as the tyzanny of the pope extended, so the we neuer read of they were any where els so greuously afflicted with pestilences, either before Christ, or after the gospell reuealed as in the midst of popery. But peradventure the papists will object that they are not only plagued with pestilence, but the same doth also take hold vpon our countreys & cities: we chuse the same to come to passe through our sinnes & iniquities: but here it is spoken of the rare & vniwonted greatnes of the punishment which is plainly perceived to haue ben poured forth vpon the kingdome of antichrist, wherethe lord doth only afflict ours gently with fatherly corrections.

And

Mark. 1. And the 2. Iungell powred out his viall upon the sea & it became
as y^e bloud of a dead man, & euery liuing thing died in the sea &c.

The Lord will beate downe there pride not with any kinde
of punishment as we said before, but with summe plagues
and often repeated. And this figure resembleth the firste pla-
gue of y^e Egyprians Exod. 7. whe all the watters were turned
into bloud. Here also the watters of y^e sea are turned into cor-
rupted bloud, he signifieth (I thinke) y^e with warres, scditions
as well ciuill, as foren, there should be made such a great sla-
ughter of men, that the verie sea should dyawe into it a bloudy
colour. And the amplification is hyperbolicall, of which sort
there are verie many foūd in the scriptures, to expresse y^e gra-
uonnes of this punishment, wherewith god will afflicte y^e re-
probate. whole Europe almost is compassed about wth sea, whiche
whe it is sayd to be turned into bloud, signifieth y^e all shoulde
redound, & as it were overflow with warres, tumults, & blou-
die batteles. Here also histories do witness, & dayly experience
also doth teach, what great slaughters the pride of the world
ne byshopes hath caused, whiles it set princes together by the
eares with most greivous batailles to slea the selues on either
part: whose force & strengthes being weakened, he abuseth to
the confirmation of his tyrannie. who can number, how many
thousandes of men hee hath slayne? whiles hee cast downe
some Emperours from the Empire, and placed others in
there rowmes, whiles hee absolued the common people from
the fairhe geuen to there Princes, when hee against coue-
nantes invaded the Turkes, and Saccenies, whiles hee
maketh warre for the crosse, and the citie of Ierusalem & whi-
les hee soweth discordes & pitful hatreds dayly among Chris-
tians, and nowe before oure eyes, what tragedies hath hee ray-
sed up in Germany, France, Scotland, and Spaine? and from
whiche oure countrie of England is not altogether free. But
howsoeuer he applyeth his business, god in the meane time car-
neth the calamitie vpon his owne head & maketh the sea blou-
die with the slayne carcases of the papistes. That he sayeth
euery liuing thing dyed in the sea, it is a conuenient

reuelation of S. Iohn.

hyperbole for the Allegorie, and also together therewith bee alludeth to the fishes of the Egyptians that were slayne, when the waters were turned into blood. But of these things, whiche we haue said it is not harde to vnderstande what he meaneth.

Art. 4. And the thurde Angell powred forth his viall vpon the rivers and fountaynes of waters and they turned to bloud, &c.

That nothing might remayne pure and hollesome to the wicked, first the earth and the sea, now the rivers and fountaynes, afterwarde the sunne it selfe, are stricken with sandy plague. And this calamitie doth represente that firste plague of Egypte, by which the waters of the floud Nilus, and generally all lakes and fountaynes were turned into corrupt bloud. But in that in the powring forth of two vials the waters are turned into bloud, I thinke it is so bee referred to the more large scourgings for the of the slaughter done vppon the wicked, which thing also the two Angells do afterwarde confesse: that because the thirst of bloude is insatiable in the kingdome of Antichrist, therefore by the lawe of equalitie, all thinges with them are turned into slaughter, and bloud.

Art. 5. And I heroe the Angell of the waters saye &c.

I thinke the lawe concerning the Angell of the waters which I saw before of the Angell, which had power ouer fire. Surely that he is a certen power to whome God hath committed the gouernement of the waters. For by this name, (power) the Apostle Paule calleth a certeyne order of the Angells, Ephel. Chap. 1. Coloss. Chap. 1. And surely is the Angell of the waters brought in here, acknowledging that this punishment hath woorthely happened vnto them, that they shoulde drinke bloud in steade of water, which with so great heat of crueltie thursteth after bloud. For although this Angell be set ouer the waters that he might preserue and kepe them from destructio, and corruption, notwithstanding in that, beinge turned into bloud they were corrupted, he confelleth that it came to passe, by the

by the iust iudgement of God, for a punishment vpon the wicked for there monstrous and horrible crueltie.

Lord thou art iust, which art, and wast holy, bycause thou hast iudged these thinges. &c. He magnifieth the moste iust Iudgements of God, which fulfilleth the office of a righteous and vncorrupt Judge. And such as he sheweth him self in sending this plague, such hath he bene in all ages, euen from the beginning of the world. which although according to the sense of the flesh may seeme sometime to be to litle, yet notwithstanding at length when we shalbe indued with Angelicall wisdom, we shall vnderstand that all his Iudgements do consist in most beautifull equitie.

Act. 6. For they shed the blood of Sainctes and Prophetes:
and therefore hast thou geuen them blood to drinke:
for they are worthy. &c.

The raging crueltie of Antichrist which he exerciseth dayly vpon the holy martyres of God, shall not escape unpunished, but he which is neuer satisfied in drincking the blood of the righteous, at length when the waters are turned into blood shall drinke his fill of blood. For the lawe of repaying is most equall and righte, that they which seeke nothing, but the blood of the Sainctes, and of the Prophetes should them selues with bloudie warres, and cruell slaughters be satisfied euen till they be wearie.

Act. 7. And I herde an other anngell out of the altar saying. &c.

Vhen as before hee had placed the soules of those that were slayne for Christ vnder the altar Chap. 6. Requiring vengeance vpon there persecutors: I agree with those which referre this voice, whiche came from the altare to the same soules, now at length acknowledging it to be true, which was sayed to them before, that if they should rest a litle while vntill the number of there brethren which should likewise be slayne for the testimonie of the gospel, were fulfilled, that by & by after god would grievously punish the wicked reprobate.

Euen so Lord God almighty, true and righteous are thy Iudgements. &c. First this voice subscribeth to the Anngell

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of the waters, which had sayed that the waters were worthely
tourued into blood, that they mighte bee giuen for drinke, to
blond thirly men, after warde it doth magnifie the almightie
power, truthe & righteousnes of god. For God hath declarth
his power, whē as to beat down & proude, he hath ouerthrowē
them with so great slaughters, he hath comēded his truthe see-
ing he hath cast vpo & wicked & punishmēt which he hath of-
ten threathēd so soze. And he hath shewed his righteousnesse,
whē as he hath not only brought vpon thē the due paynes for
there heynouse offences, but also by the Iust lawe of repaying
like for like, hath found out a conuenient kinde of torment for
there wickednesse, that they which were so greatly delighted
with the deinties of cruell & blondie bankettes, should drinke
one of an others blood, whiles to there owne destructiō, they
rage dayly with ciuill warres, slaughters and tumultes. True
therefore and iust are his Iudgementes.

Mat. 8. And the fourth angell powred forth his viall on the sunne,
and it was giuen vnto him to torment men with heate of fire.

God will haue nothing remayne sound vnto them, which by
no benefices can be drawne to worship him. We all knowe
sufficiently how acceptable and amiable the light of the sunne
is, how healthfull the influēce of that starre is, the learned do
acknowledge, how necessarie the vse of the same is to all men,
the learned together with the vnlearned also doe confesse. But
to the reprobate ministers of Antichrist, whiche darckened the
onely sunne of righteousness with there owne deuises, & in-
uentiōs, and by there blondy decrees haue assayed to take him
out of the world, God will make the naturall, and refreshing
heat of the sunne, pestiferous and deadly, so that in burninge
all thinges, and also afflicting and tormenting men then sel-
ues with intollerable heate, he bringeth in hunger and thirst,
and most pestilent diseases which rise and spring of the same.
Moreover so large as the vertue of the sunne doth extend, all
thinges shall burne with inmoderate heat, who can deny, but
& they were afflicted with verie great famine in the papaline,
so that many also perished for want of foode. Moreover who
knoweth not of the fevers, languishing diseases, & pestilences
spring-

springing of vnpure viuals, which sometime also light vpon the popes them selues, if he haue read the historie of the times deduced from boniface the thirde, in whome the papacie beganne, vnto these our times.

Herf. 9. And men boyled in great heat, & blasphemed the name of God. **H**e signifieth \bar{p} they parched not onely with comon heate of \bar{p} sunne, as they be in horte countries, but scorched with far greuouser boyling heate of the bright starre: that they were almost turned into madnes through \bar{p} tormentes. But at length what profitte toke the wicked by these chastisements: they blasphemed the name of god, ascribing these plagues not to there owne abominable wickednes, but to \bar{p} vnrightrousnes of the lord. To the Italians, & also to the chiefe bysshopes, & popes the selues, how familier & accusumable a thing it is to teare \bar{p} sacred & holy name of god with horrible blasphemies, yea euen for \bar{p} lightest damages or hurttes, those know which haue sene & viewed there manners, & cities. With what fury & rage thinke ye, would they darke against god as it were mad dogges, to the these grienouse tormentes apprehended & toke hold of the. So one ouer which is the common blasphemie to all the papistes, that they teare the holy gospel of Christ, which god of his infinite clemencie & mercie hath vouchesafed to open, & crucale vnto vs in these last daies, with most filchie reproches, & attribute all the euils wherewith they are afflicted, to the preaching and spreading abroad of the same.

Which hath powre ouer these plagues. &c. He amplifieth there deuillish wickednesse, that directely they touche him with these blasphemies, which hath powre ouer these plagues either to increase or to diminish them, neither do they feare, least being prouoked to anger by there horrible blasphemies, he shold throwe vpon them moze heauier and sozer tormentes. Were we may obserue and note the nature and properties of the reprobate, whiche beinge subdued with no chastismentes of god do yeld or geue place, but with howe manie moze scourges of God they are chastised, so much \bar{p} moze obstinately and proude-lye they swell against God.

And they repented not to geue him glorie. &c. These are

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are taught here what fruite god loketh for of our chastisement verely that we should repent for our sinnes, and ascribe þe glorie to god, which hath worthely chastised vs, confessinge that we haue deserued by our heynouse offences, that he should punish vs more grievously, and may acknowledge that he tempereth this iustice with clemencie euen then whē he punisheth. The wicked do not this, but they alwaies complaine of the severity & sharpenesse of god, when as in verie deede the thousande parte of there wickednesse deserueth not these temporall afflictions, but eternall tormentes.

Uers. 10. And the fiftē angell poured out his viall vpon the throne of the beast, and his kingdome wared darcke. &c.

Although god hath heretofore with most grievouse plagues taken vengeance vpon the vngodlinesse of the members of Antichrist, yet neuertheless the euils scarce came neare to the head him selfe. For in warre famine and pestilence, þe common people are rather afflicted then the prelates & noble personages. Now therefore the Lord doth begiune to punish the verie head of the beast, and his chiefe members, when as the first Angell powreth forth the viall of gods wrath, vpon the throne of the beast, which I interprete to be done, when as through the preachers of the gospel the controuersie concerning the power of Rome was firste moued, whiche at length beinge discussed by the authoritie of the scriptures, the Antichristian pride & arrogancie of the beast was made manifest to the worlde. For then his kingdome wared darcke. And that glorie of the popish kingdome, by which through mad pride he had raised himselfe aboue all Churches, yea aboue þe scriptures, is altogether darkened in the whole world, so that euerie where, verie manie men doe renounce the authoritie of the Bpshopp of Rome, princes do expell and daine his authoritie oute of there Dominions, and to conclude the common people, yea euen of the verie papistes, do contemne his bulles, and pardons, and deride and mocke his curses, violate & bryke his lawes and decrees without any conscience of them.

And they gnawe there tongues for sorow. &c. The Romanistes

misses take moste heauily this contempte of their dignitie, but they finde not how they maye restore them selues to their olde glorye and auctoritie. They indenuour in deed with all diligence and omitte nothinge, if by anye meanes they mighte recouer there lost dignitie, but the matter is past recouerye, therefore beinge in dispaire for the greate anguyshe of minde, like as it were mad men, they bite and gnaw there owne tounge. The holy ghost doth signifie by this metaphoe, that nothinge coulde hane happened vnto them moze greivouse, then that the throne and kingdome of the beast should be darkened with the thicke cloude of reproche and contempt.

Act. 11. And blasphemed the god of heauen, for their
paines and for there sores, and repented not
of their woorkes. &c.

They are saith he oppressed on euery side with so greate sorow, for the disclosing of there fraudes, errors, pride & shamefull life, that beinge but wicked inhabitants of the earth, they prouoke the very God of heauen with horrible blasphemies. For there sores. Wotten and festered sores cannot suffer the least touchinge. But now when as they are not lightly touched onely, but lanced and seared with knives and hot irons, it is not to be meruailed at, though the miserable men be giuen into a furious madness. But yet in the mean time they haue no care of repentaunce, which is the onely medicine and salue for ther pestred wounds. For although of what sort there woorkes are they may be of all men, yet neuer the latter they geue themselves to there olde accustomed wicked and deuillish vices, as couctousnes crueltye and filthy lust. Whereouer this place doth teach that true repentaunce is to abstaine from wicked woorkes. For if we shall say a thousande times y our wickednes doth displease vs, except we bring forth fruits worthy of repentaunce, we are nothinge els but hypocrites. Here also we see and perceiue the nature of the reprobate, whiche loke how much neerer they are to exteme and bitter destruction, so muche moze malapertly they despise the maiestie of God.

Act. 17. And the first Iungell powred forth his biall vpon the greate
riner Euphrates, and the waters therof dyed by that the

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waye of the kinges of the east should be prepared. &c.

After that γ kingdome is obscured, so that there is nothing in the whole worlde darker then the papacie: the sixte Angell now powreth forth the sixt viall of Gods wrath vpon the great riuer Euphrates. The citie of Rome in this propheticke is allegorically painted forth vnder the figure of Babylon, and the riuer Euphrates was so great a defence to the olde Babylon, that when Cyrus would haue taken that Citie, he could not by anie other meanes, the by deriuing the riuer Euphrates from his Chanell, and turning away the course and streame of the waters, he made the floude it selfe passable: And by this meanes he opened an entraunce and passage to himselfe, into the most strong defended citie, to the whiche Historie no doubt, the holy ghost here alludeth, when he sayeth that the waters of Euphrates were dried vp, that a way should be prepared to the kinges of the East, to take and possesse the citie. He signifieth therefore that all the defences and munitions of the Romane Empire should by the Just iudgement of God be destroyed, that the Romanistes being spoiled and made naked of all there ayde, may be a pray to all there enemies that shall inuade them. which thinge whether it shalbe by the Turcke, and other tyrantes of the East, or by the Princes of Europe, which haue embraced the Gospell, and shall occupy, & possesse Babylon it selfe, I ca not for certentie define any thing thereof, but the ende shall once most plainly shewe. Truly there is no man whiche seeth not, that the west Babilon is spoiled almost of all strength wherewith in time past she was furnished, (which is that the waters of Euphrates are dried vp) so that the assalte thereof is nowe verie easie and shalbe to those to whome God shall sometime committe this busines.

Revel. 17. And I saw three vncleane spirits like frogges, come out of the mouth of the Dragon and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the falsse Prophetes. &c.

After that Sathan perceyued that great danger hanged ouer his kingdome, which he gouerneth by the handes of Antichrist the Romane bishop, that diligent watchfull Dragon, 818

stirreth by the beast, that is the pope pricked with the furies of his conscience, that by the consent and counsaill of the false prophete the two horned beast, that is, of the popish clergie of Cardinales, and bysshopes, messingers, and Legates a Latere are sente forth to all Princes of the earthe, as manye as acknowledge his auctoritie, that they may stirre them by with there croking cries, like the furies of hell, and may arme them to exercise crueltie against the godly professors of the Gospell, by the inquisitors of hereticall prauitie as they call them, and by other maisters of mischief. we are here admonished that there is one and the selfe same purpose to the Dragon, the beast and the false prophete, that is, to the deuill, the pope, and the popish clergie, that when they feare that the ruine and ouerthrowe of his tyrannie hangeth ouer them, throughe the Gospell, they labour and endeuour by all meanes to hinder & stoppe & conserue thereof. For all things are gouerned in the papacie, by the auctoritie and inspiration of the deuill. Moreouer he sayeth that the Legates, or messingers of the pope, are vncleane spirites, like vnto frogges or todes. Bycause that like as vncleane spirites drine those into madnesse in whome they dwell: so these inflame with turie & mad rage, the princes and mightie men, to whome they are sent, against all the godly, and against them selues, that to there owne utter destruction they maye rage against Christ, and his sacred Gospell. And they are sayed to be like frogges, either bycause they are delighted with mier and mearish places, that is the filth puddles of errours, or els that without any reason they alwaies croke and crie out with making bubbles like frogges, vntill they shall compell kinges to conspire against god, and against his sacred tructh.

Act. 14. For they are the spirites of deuils working myracles, to go out vnto the kinges of the earth, and the whole world &c.

When as before he had said that they were vncleane spirites, now he repeareth that they are the spirites of deuils, that is euen the verie members and Instrumentes of the deuill, that all may knowe that the counsell wherewith they inspire kinges, is vngodly and diuillish. (working myracles) bewitching

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ching the eyes of men with illusions and sayned miracles, as though they were the ministers of god, when as in verie deede they are the slaves of *Sathan*. For so they colour there lies to Princes, that they may tourne there eyes from the light of the gospel. For valesse they were altogether blinde, they would neuer applic there eares to suche bablers: that they should suffer them selues at the will and becke of Antichrist to be mustred into that warre which is taken in hande against the almighty god him selfe.

To gather them to the battaill of that great daye of God almightie. &c. In which day a samouse and suche a slaughter as was neuer herde of before shalbe made vpon all the proude contemners of god, whiche would suffer them selues to be set in battell aray against god, & against his Christ: in whiche daie also the perpetuall praise of victorie, and eternall triumphe shalbe obteyned vnto Christ. when all the army of Antichrist being slayne, ouerthrowne, and vanquished, the excellent glorie of his vertue and power shall alwayes haue the renoume.

Uers. 15.

Beholde I come as a thefe. &c.

I Confesse that this verse is interlaced altogether withoute any haying together of the texte, but not withoute reason. For seeing mention was made in the ende of the verse going nexte before, of that great and fearefull daye of the Lorde god almighty, which should catche and oppresse the reprobate, like a snare: this admonition is not out of season intermedled, that the godly may learne alwaies to watche, least the remembrance of that day should at any time slippe out of there mindes. Beholde I come as a thefe, it is y^e voice of Christ Math. 24. Luke 12. Threatning that his second coming shalbe todaync and vnlooked for to the worlde, as the flood of waters in the dayes of Noah, and the fire in the dayes of Lot.

Blessed is he that watcheth, and kepeth his garmentes lest he walke naked and men see his filthinesse. &c. when as the coming of the lord is so vncerteyne, it behoueth vs alwaies to watche, neither at any time to sleape in the bedde of securitie. What therefore which they that watche do, for they do not put
of

of there garments, as they doe whiche goe to bedde: that same is to be followed of vs in these Spirituall watches that we maye alwaies keepe, and holde fast the garment of faith e and innocencie least if the light of that great day springing vp sodaynly, should daine awaye all the darkenesse of dissimulation, wee be founde to walke naked, and so the deformitie of oure nakednesse be visible, or seene bothe to G O D and men. This garmente Christ doeth freely geue vnto vs, so that wee will receyue and gyde the same diligentlye aboute vs.

Act. 16. And he gathered them into a place called in the
Hebwe tongue Armageddon. &c.

THe order of his narration beinge a litle interrupted, to bringe in and place betwene a most profitable admonition, he retourneth againe to his purpose namelye that the Deuill, & Antichrist by those Legates sente forthe gathered together Kinges & there armes into a place apointed for there owne killinge and slaughter, to which the name Armageddon in the Hebwe tongue is giuen, for that which came to passe there whiche is worthie to be remembred. Concerning the signification whereof, it is not agreed of among the learned, for some do expounde it Charmageddon, that is an army appointed to destruction, but others doe more rightly (in my Iudgemente) read this woorde in Hebwe Snarmageddon, that is the subtiltie of destruction, so that the sense is, that by the deceypte or fraude of the Deuils, the Princes are brought into that place, where they should perishe by a slaughter in battaill, like as it is expounded more at large in the last verse of the 19. chap. And we know that it was vsuall among the Hebrewes of the like thinges y happened to geue names to places: as Liboth, Bataauah, the graues of concupiscence, Num. 11. And Bammongog, that is the multitude of people. Ezek. 39.

Act. 17. And the seuerthe Angel powred forth his
viall into the ayre. &c.

This last plague seemeth the most grieuouse of all, because the other touched a parte onely, but this striketh the whole
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body of Antichrist with extreme destruction. For now the lord God himselfe furnished with his owne vertue and power, will set vpon the beaste and his city Babylon, for now Antichrist shall not haue so muche as the ayre, whiche he may breathe, but beinge armed for his destruction.

¶ And there came a great voice out of the temple of heauen from the throne, sayinge
it is donne. &c.

This sentence proceeded or came forth from the maiesty of God it selfe, and from his certaine determinate counsell, which is so suerly ratified and confirmed, that it can by no meanes be called backe againe. This voice signifieth that the last ruine of Antichrist, both hange ouer his heade whiche he can by no meanes auoide or eschew.

Verse. 18. And there followed voices thundringes and lightnings, and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were vpon the earth, so mighty an earthquake I meane. &c.

This is, that all thinges shall be tossed vp and downe with the horrible terrores that they whose iron breastes could not be pearced through with any strookes of the plagues that went before, that they might repent: that now be stricken with so great bozroze, that with the fearefulness of minde they shall downe as deade. Moreover those turmoles of the ayre, and chiefly the earthquake so wonderfull, doe fore shew the most greuous and great chaunges in the worlde, of which as we see the beginninges, so verely the end will be tragicall and horrible.

Verse. 19. And the great citie was diuided into thre partes, and the cities of the gentils fell, &c.

NOW followeth, the effect of this earthquake the greatest of all others, that greate city, which is the sea of Antichrist, the whole multitude of those which were subiectes to the pride of Rome, cloue into thre partes throughe the violence of this earthquake, whiche manye do thus interpret, and in my iudgement

mente rightely. They which in time past with one consente haue worshipped the beast, are now deuided into three sectes. For some of them doe from there verie harte abhorre and detest his tyrannie, others doe remayne in the same slauiery still, and the thirde kinde of men doe sticke to neither parte. But hath fallen either into Epicurisme, or Atheisme. They exponde the Cities of the Gentiles, to bee all the forren and false religions, as of the Turkes, and Jewes and Barbarous people, all whiche Religions it is certeyne shalbe destroyed at the comming of Christ or else a litle before, but it becometh vs with sobriety to coniecture of those things which are not yet come to passe.

And great Babylon came in remembraunce before God to geue vnto her the cuppe of the wine of the scarcenesse of his wrathe. &c. Not that God had at anye time forgot her, whiche hath also sent vpon her those former plagues. But he signifieth that his whole wrath was now to be powred forth at once vpon her, that he mighte utterly subuerie and overthrowe her, as it shalbe taught more playnly in the Chapter 18. we haue spoken before of the cuppe of the wine of Gods wrath. Chap. 14. But that here also is added an other worde signifying wrath to the greater Emphasis, for he sayeth not onely wrath, but also the anger or fiercenesse of his wrath.

Uers. 20. Everye yle fled awaye and the mountaynes were not founde. &c.

So great shall the earthquake be that it doth swallowe vp and deuoure the Mountaynes and Isles. Some doe referre this to the ende of the worlde, but I thinke it signifieth that all place of refuge is taken awaye, for men are wont in the greatest calamities, to flie for ayde or safegarde to the mountaynes and yles.

Uers. 21. And there fell a great hayle as it had bene talentes, out of heauen vpon the men, and men blasphemed God, because of the plague of the hayle, for the plague thereof was exceeding great. &c.

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LIke as God oppressed the men of Berocho with hyle fro heauen, so likewise will he beate downe & grinde in pecces his aduersaries the Antichristians, with great stones as it were talentes, from heauen. All these are a Descriphzalis and as it were a description of the horrible ende, which remaineth for the reprobate, which we are taughte can by no plagues be reformed, or brought to repentaunce, but alwaies they blasphemie God, so that they shew them selues worthy that God should make them perpetuall monumentes of his wrath, and should adiudge them to eternall tormentes.



¶ The seuententh Chapter.

Hetherto he hathe withe sundrie colours painted oute Antichrist him selfe now also vnder the figure of the great whore, he describeth his Church, or the adulterouse religion, afterwarde he expoundeth the miserie as well of the whore as of the beast y beareth her: and lastlye he foretellet the destruction of them both.

Reu. 1. Then there came one of the seuen Angels whiche had the seue vials, & talked with me, saying vnto me.

The selfe same Angels whiche are the Ministers of Gods wrathe and seueritie vpon the wicked, do serue the godlye to there comforte, and consolation, and to the buyldinge vp of the Church. Whiche thinge truely is neither vnprofitable nor vnpleasent to thinke y we haue those appointed of god to defend oure healeth & wellfare, which as often as it seemeth good to god, can casely ouerthrowe and subuert, all the engins
and

and subtilties of the aduersaries. We may note also how familiarly the Angells speake to the Apostle: whome for the benefit of Christ they acknowledge to be there brother and fellow seruant.

Come I will shew thee the damnation of the great whore that sitteth vpon many waters. &c. When diuers times before he had made mention of the great citie, now the holy ghost that he might make manifest of what citie he had vnder stood or ment, doth describe it vnder the image or figure of the great whoze. For the great whoze as the Angell afterwarde doth expound it, signifieth a greate citie, like as many waters, where vpon she sitteth, doe signifie many people, ouer which she ruleth and worthly is the Church or Romishe religion, whose whole auctority dependeth vpon that citie of seven hilles, compared to a famous and noble harlot, which enticed the mindes of men to her filthy loue with the whozishe deceits, and false colours as it were with harlotlike enticementes. For it is vsuall in the scriptures, to compare all false and idolatrous worshiping, to most filthy adultries. But the sinagoge of Rome, whiche aboue all other heresies hath inuented false and idolatrous worshiping of God, may as it were by her owne proper right challenge to her selfe the name of a greate whoze. Which although she doeth please and flatter her selfe and her louers, as though she were a bewtiful wife, yet neuertheless by the iuste iudgement of God, she is condemned to eternall shame, and dishonour as a most filthy harlot.

¶ *¶* with whom haue committed fornication the kings of the earth.

This was not the least part of the whozishe art, that she enticed and alured kinges and mightie men, with fained flatteringes, and practises of balwzy, into fornication, for by this meanes she did hope that she shoulde haue the commune people there subiects, euen bowed to her loue. Therefore she flattereth princes and graunteth them licence of all wickednes, in pardoning all thinges as murders, adultries, and incestes, so that they stand stedfast in the obedience of the sea of Rome.

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And the inhabitantes of the earthe are droncke with the wine of her fornication &c. *She hath played the harlot not with kinges onely, but generally with all the inhabitantes of the earth, as a most impudent whoze, and with the furiose wine of her fornication hath made them droncken in suche a bominable maner, that they are euen like swine inflamed to fill and satissie there lust with her. And this is that zeale of the papistes wherewith they are in mad dotage vypon masses, to Munkerie, Pilgrimages, Pardons, so that they cared not to bestowe all there substance vpon the same baggage, bycause reason being overcome with luste, they are made droncken with the wine of her fornication.*

*Uers. 3. So he caried me awaye into the wilderness.
in the spirit. &c.*

Seinge the time of manifestinge this whoze in the worlde was not yet come, although even then the misterie of iniquitie did worke, this harlotte is placed in the deserte, whiche after certeyne hundred yeares should by the Just Iudgemente of God be broughte forth into the worlde, to bewitch the wicked inhabitantes of the earth: therefore Iohn is lead into the wilderness by the Angell to beholde this whoze.

And I sawe a woman sit vpon a scarlat coloured beast. &c.

*When Iohn was come in to the wilderness, the Image of the woman sittinge vpon a scarlat coloured beast, was shewed and set before him, by the description it appeareth that it is the verie same beast whiche is linely described in the thirteenth Chap. for the Church or religiō of Rome is stayed vpon the authoritie of the pope and his clergie, which beare hit vpon euen as beastes carie a burden, & with praises extoll her beautie aboue the heauens. The colour also of the beast is paynted out to be like scarlet, which colour we knowe dothe please the court of Rome aboue all coloures, for wiche this coloure the pope him selfe, with this the Cardinales & there hoyses, with this the prelates & Bpshopes beinge apatailed and decked, do walke in there statelynesse. which thing, I suppose, is not done
rashly*

rashly or at auenture, but that they mighte be aunswerable to this figure. And this red coloure doth signifie there bloody desire in persecuting the true members of Christ and the Church, euen vnto death.

Full of names of blasphemie. &c. If thou shouldest weigh and examine the names and callinges of all degrees, or orders in poperie, thou shouldest finde nothing but horrible blasphemies, as the holines, the highnesse, & fatherhode of the pope, & prelates, & infinite blasphemies of the same sorte, with which base & vnlearned verities, are extolled about Christ, and the Angels.

Which had seuen heades and ten hornes. &c. These are his badges or armes whereby hee is known, for they shewe that he is the selfe same beast, which he sawe befoze in the 13. Chapter: whose mysticall interpretation also hee afterwarde receiued.

Verf. 4. And the woman which I saw was araide in purple and crimson, and girded with gold, precious stones, and pearles. &c.

This verse conceynerh 2. thinges, the apparell & decking of this whore and her wicked fornication. As concerning her apparail she shinerh all ouer with purple, crimson, gold, pearles and precious stones that she may seeme beautifull to her louers. Far other is the apparail of the true Church, of which we reade befoze in the twelue Chapter, whiche is garnished altogether with heauenlye ornamentes, but this stinking harlotte with the glitteringe shewe of earthlye thinges hawketh for the praise, and commendation of beautie, for wee see how that the Church of Rome, & popish religion, in altars copes, vestiments, miters, crosses, chalisses, bookes, censers, patines, in gilding & decking images doth shew nothing els, but a certen pompe of great riches, of purple, crimson, silke, syluer, gold, precious stones & pearles, of which thinges, Christiā religion hath no neede of at all, but a popish religiō cannot stand without these thinges: for take from the pope, frō the byshopes, temples, & priests, those player like apparails of purple, crimson, gold, & precious stones which are so beautifull to behold, with whiche heeies of the blockish and rude multitud are da

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seled, and thou shalt finde nothing in the Church of Rome that any man will meruaile at or esteeme. For as common harlots, when there precious apparail is pulled of are, often times seene to be deformed, so also the popishe religion if thou take from it those tragicall attires, shall seeme altogether naked and deformed, euen to the verie Papistes them selues. which thing truely is an euident proofe, that there is no spirituall beautie at all in her, when as she is wholly giuen to bodily ornamentes, sought out euerie where.

She had a golden cup in her hand full of abominations & filthinesse of her fornication. &c. I agree with those whiche by the golden cup doe vnderstand the outward profession of Christian religion, and a certeyn shew of the truethe, whiles that she boasteth that she doth beleue the worde of God, and vse the sacramentes, all which, notwithstanding, she hath defiled with so vnpure doctrines of deuils, & vnder an outward visor of truethe she comprehendeth nothing, but detestable abominations and the vncleane of her fornication. The cup therefore which she holdeth forth with her hande is of golde, but the wine which is conteyned in it, is most deadly poison. But in that she reacheth forth with her hand, and offereth the cup of these filthy abominations to all men, her impudencie is noted that she is not ashamed to obtunde and thrust such stinking lies and filthy monstrous errors: yea to be credited euen of wise men, he doeth also together therewith shewe, that none other are drawne into so great destruction of filthinesse, and abominations, but those whome she maketh so mad with this bewitching cup, that they haue lost all sparke of true iudgement. The Emphasis also of these wordes is to be noted, *ἡ ἀβυσσος*, that is abominations, & the filthinesse of her fornication, because aboue all other nations, this sinagoge hath abounded euen wonderfully, in vncleane lustes, whoredomes and adulteries as well spirituall, as carnall.

Uers. 5. And in her forehead was a name written. &c.

That her filthinesse and impudēce, might be hidde from no man excepte hee burne in so great loue towards her that he be

he be altogether blinde : she wereth a name writen openly in that her whozish forehead, which fully & lively expreſſeth her qualities. For there is no man which hath but euen a ſparke, or crome of true vnderſtandinge, but that euen in the verve face, and ſo in the forehead of this purple whoze, he may reade her name. For God hath ſet this marke of infamy vpon her, that ſhe might caſely be knowne of the electe, leaſt they ſhould be inticed and drawne into her filthy embracings. Of whiche it ſoloweth that the eyes of the papifles are viterlyc blinded, which can not beholde this name printed and grauen vpon the forehead of the whoze in ſuche ſorte that by no cunning ſhe can hide the ſame, whereby at length they might repent and turne from the vnhoneſt companie of her.

A miſterie. &c. Although it be writen in the forehead, yet it can not be knowne of all without exception, but of thoſe onely to whome it is genen to vnderſtand miſteries. For this name is miſticall, bycauſe that vnder a figure it conteyneth, a true and naturall deſcription of her.

Great Babylon. &c. This is her name, whiche verie ſiely expreſſeth her maners. For that this is the proper name of the citie, as the papifles are wont now of late to expounde it, with a feyned lye of a certeyn childe borne at Babylon, whom they would haue men beleue to be Antichriſt, but as he ſayed befoze, this name is miſticall and figuratiue, the interpretation whereof he will afterwarde ioyne, which ſhould be altogether ſuperfluous, if Babylon ſhould ſignifie literally that citie of the Chaldeans. But bycauſe that citie in time paſt being moſt noughtie and moſt proude, firſt was a rebell againſt God, whē as that tower was buyled after which ſollowed the confuſion of tongues, afterwarde it was the firſte citie, whiche exerciſed tyrannie vpon men, which being begunne by Nymrod, continued euen vnto Nabuchadnezar, whiche lead the people of the Jewes caprine, and helde the in miſerable bondage, therefore the tyrannie, Idolatrie, pride and vngodlineſſe of the citie of Rome, is ſignified vnder the figure of Babylon.

The mother of whoredomes, and abominations of the

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earth. &c. The east Babylon was a sincke of all abomination and vngodlines, and not that a lone, but also a mistres of wickednes, yea a mother and nurse of all euill: all which are most fitlye referred to the Synagoge of Rome, whiche althoughe she boaste her selfe to be the Catholique and Apostolicall Church: the mother of all the faithfull, yet by her true and righte name she is called greate Babylon, the mother of all Whoredomes and abominations of the earth: For what mischiefe, what vngodlines, what vncleanes, and lewd lust, was not cherished by the support and defence of that city: and where are there worse examples of all kinde of deuillish wickednes, then at Rome: whiche are so greate pestilences and corruptions, as the berge Popes, Cardinals and prelats themselves: of whome, besides there blasphemouse errours, and prophane contemptes of God there life also abounded and ouerflowed with so great mischiefe that often times they exceded, Nero, Domitian, Elagabalus, in pride, in murders, in poisonings, treasons, whoredomes, adultries, incestes, and preposterouse lustes. Let their lynes be examined as they are set forth in histories, wyten euen by the papists them selues and let iudgement be geuen by conseringe together.

Uers. 6. And I saw the woman drunken with the bloud of sanctes and with the bloud of the martirs of Iesus. &c.

H E therto her pride, excelle and filthy abomination are described. vnto these now commeth so great cruelty, that Sainct John affirmeth that he saw the whore drunken with the bloud of the sanctes, and martirs of Iesus Christ, whiche she sucked and dronke, very greedilye, as most delicate wine, when it was shed by the most cruell beast. This is a horrible and a barbarous cruelty, that a woman otherwise wanton and lasciuious should gorge in and deuoure bloud in steade of drinke. And moreover that euen vnto drunkennes she should poure in the bloud of the godly into her bellie the goulfe of all intemperance, what should I here rehearse the murders, burnings, tormentes, of the holpe martyres of God, whiche the Romane
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beast like a butcher steele, that the continuall thirstie harlot mighte not want drinke euen to make her droncken. what a miserable slaughter of the seruantes of Christ hath our countreie of England scene in the five yeares persecution of Quene Mary: and what other thing at all doth the most cruell whore thirste for? whiles she raiseth vp ciuill troubles, in France, Flaunders, Scotland, & Britanie, but the blood of Gods saintes: whiles the inquisitours in Spaine, & Italie doe drawe great companies of martires dayly, euen as shepe to the slaughter, they do there diligence that the intemperaunce of there mistris the great whore, should not fayle.

And when I saw her I wondered with great meruaill. &c. when as S. Iohn had scene before so great monsters armed against the Church of God, he lesse wondered at them, because there terrible forme and shape it selfe sufficiently bewayed of what sorte they were. But here when he had scene the woman, shining in so bewricfull and gorgiouse apparail, and with suche whorish trickes enticing the mindes of men vnto her, and the same also droncken with the bloude of the Saintes, he wondereth vehemently what she should be, concerninge whome as yet he had heard nothing.

Act. 7. And the Angell sayed vnto me wherefore marvellest thou? I will shewe thee, the misterie of the woman and of the beast that beareth her, which hath seven heades and ten hornes. &c.

When as the Angell perceyued y^e Iohn meruailed so greatly at the beholding of the whore, the misterie of whome he knew not, he speaketh vnto him familiarly asking him why he wondered so muche at her? for I sayed he will open, and declare vnto the all this whole mysterie of what sorte it is, as well of that woman, whiche rideth vppon the scarlet coloured beast, as of the Beast him selfe, whiche beareth her, whiche if thou hast well remembred is the same, whiche thou sawest before furnished with seven heades and tenne hornes. we are here muche bounde to the mercie of God, that he doth vouchsafe to open this misterie vnto vs, y^e we should beware

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and take hede of the bewitchinges of this most filthy harlot.

Uers. 8. The beast which thou hast seene, was and is not, and shall ascende out of the bottomles pit and shall goe into destruction. &c.

That beast by markes that are euident enough, doth signifye the Empire of Rome, whiche was most ample & large vnder Julius, Augustus, Tyberius, and Claudius, but it had sayled much of that auncient maiestie, in Nero, Galba, Orho, Vitellius, and Domitian, so that nowe it deserued not to be called a monarchie, but was to be raised vp againe from hell by the popes and popish clergie, whiche vsurpe and challenge to them selues the Empire ouer the whole world, but his tyrannie shall not indure for euer, because at length he shall be apprehended by Christ and thrown headlong in to the lake that burneth with fire and bymstone; where he shall be tormented with perpetuall flames, as we are afterwarde taught in the 19. Chapter.

And they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names are not written in the booke of lyfe from the foundation of the worlde, when they beholde the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. &c. Although the fallhoodes of Antichrist shall be great, yet they shall not be able to seduce the electe into destruction, but to deceyue those onely which were not predestinate to eternall life, from the foundation of the world, but the reprobate when as they shall see a newe monarchie of the byshop of Rome raised vp (which is the beast that was vnder the firste Emperours (but he is not) at that time when Iohn write vnder Domitian, (although he was after a certeyn maner) they will receyue him reuerently, & as it were a newe God they will worshippe the sonne of perdition, which extollet him selfe aboue all that is called God, or that is worshipped. For God by his Iust Judgement shall sende vpon them the efficacie of error, that they may beleue lies which refused to geue credite to the truth. But here for the better vnderstanding we must note, that the beast, that is the monarchie of Rome, is sayed to haue bene, when as it flourished most of all which

whiche was Nero, it is sayed not to be, when as the strengthes and mighte thercof were breakied, so that at length they were brought almost to nothinge, which was the state of the Empire when Domitian reigned, when John wrote these things, from which time it was neuer restored to her auncient dignity, but failed and decreased by litle and litle, untill it was altogether decayed whiche wee know came to pas manye hundred yeares agoe, this clause (and yet is) sheweth that the empire was not then utterly abolished, although euen then the power and dignitie thercof began to be diminished. Last of all, that ascending of the beaste oute of the bottomles pit, is the monarchye of the Pope, which alwaies increased by the decay of the Emperours untill at length when they were quite cast downe, he dyed on to him selfe the aucthority of both the swordes.

Verf. 9. Here is the minde that hath
wisdome. &c.

The Aungell maketh his preface, to stirre by attention, that this is the most wise interpretation of this mystery, that the faithfull might diligently weigh the same, leass they should be caught vnwares, by the fraudes and deceits of this beaste.

The seven heads are seven mountaines whereon
the woman sitteth. &c.

When as afterwarde in the eyghtenth verse the Aungell by the woman interpreteth the Citie, it is manifeste, that this whiche he sayeth of the woman sittinge vppon seven hillles is to be understoode of a Citie buylded vppon so manye hillles. Nowe what Citie is there in the whole worlde, that is buylded vpon seven hillles, besides Rome? whiche Poetes Historians, and Describers of places, doe all with one consent affirme to be buylded vpon seven Mountaynes, the names whercof be these, Capitoline, Palatine, Aventine, Caelius, Esquilinus, Timinalis, and Quirinalis. Moreouer this is no darcke Description of the Citie of Rome, when as the Poete Virgill, also dyd Describe it with the same Periphraze in his Georgikes, where hee sayeth, the
cite

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citie which within one wall doth compasse seuen hilles. And it is verie euident that by the citie of Rome hee significthe, the Church or popishe religion, for all the excellencie thereof, as they them selues witnesse dependeth on the auctoritie of the citie of Rome, which is the sea of the pope.

They are also seuen Kinges. &c. By the number of the heades he sheweth, that not one note or marke onely to decerne her may be taken, but diuers, for the seuen heades do signifie seuen kinges. And verely the citie of Rome, in the beginning had kinges in number seuen, but the verse following sheweth that, that which he sayeth here is not to be understood of them, and others some doe expound it to be the seuen electors of the Empire, which seemeth to me not to agree to the matter. Others also number the Emperours from Nero, which were these, Galba, Otho, Vitellius, Vespasian, Titus, Domitian, and Nerva, which was the last of the Romane Emperours, seing Traianus was a Spaniard borne. But whiles I weigh and consider all things, nothing seemeth more probable to me, then that the seuen heades should signifie so many degrees, or orders of the monarchie of Rome succeeding one an other, for there haue bene so manie heades of that Empire, the firste of kinges, the seconde of consuls, the thirde of decemviri, the fourth of dictators, the fift of triumviri, the sixt of Emperours, and the seuenth of popes. (Five are fallen, one is and the other is not yet come) of those heades, or kingly powers, fyue are falle that is are abolished. That is, kinges, consuls, decemviri, triumviri, and dictators. The sixt, that is that Emperours, doe now beare the rule, the seuenth that is the pope, which hath not as yet inuaded the tyrannie. And when he commeth hee must tary a litle while, this is added to the consolation of the godly that they might know the Romane Antichrist, should not alwaies exercise his cruell tyrannie in the Church, but for a short time onely, as it is shewed before, in the 11. 12. and 13. Chapter.

Act. 10. And the beast that was, and is not, is euen the syghte and is one of the seuen. &c.

Verely

Verely that is the newe monarchie of Rome, whiche shall ascend out of the bottomlesse pitte, that is the whole body of Antichrist which shall make vp the eyght kingdomes, that is, shall exercise a spirituall tyrannie vnlike to the rest, and yet neuerthelesse he is of the number of the seuen heades, bycause he will also arrogate to him selfe ciuill gouernemente, and after the maner of kinges, of dictatours, & Emperours. he will gouerne with the glorie of outwarde pompe. we see here that the beast vsurpeth to him selfe two powers, and both of them the heyghest, when the selfesame is numbered for both the seuenth and eyght of the kinges.

And shall goe into destruction. &c. When as he so often maketh mention of his destruction, he admonissheth vs, that he is the same sonne of perdition, of whom S. Paule speaketh in the second epistle to the Thessalonians Chapter 2. whiche although being puffed vp with a deuillish pride, he boasterh, that his kingdome shalbe eternall, yet shortly he shall go into destruction.

Uers. 11. And the ten hornes which thou sawest are ten kinges, which haue receyued no kingdome as yet, but shall receyue power as kinges at one hower with the beast. &c.

The ten hornes like as also in Daniell, do signifie ten kinges, that is all the proconsuls and presidents of the provinces, whiche in the Empire of Rome gouerneth & common wealch, yet they were not indued with kingly power, bycause they serued vnder the emperour, & at his pleasure, were either set vp in auctoritie or deposed. This is it that he sayeth, that they haue not yet receyued a kingdome, but so soone as the beast should ascende out of the bottomlesse pit, together with him they should receyue power as kinges. For the monarchie of the pope, encreased by the damages of the rule of the Emperours, and when as the provinces departed from the Empire, creating and setting vp to them selues newe kinges, the bishoprike of the Pope sprong vp, which receyued them into his Dominions and made them tributaries vnto him. Moreouer it is to be noted that he sayeth not simplig they shall obteyne a kingdome, but they shall receyue power as kinges.

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For as long as they were subiect to the authoritie of the byshope of Rome, they were not kinges in deede, but onely erected as it were kingly power vnder him, because they alwaies depended vpon his pleasure, whom also as oft as it pleased him he woulde thruste out of the kingdome, and place other in there roumes, at his owne will.

Act. 12. These haue one minde and shall geue there power and strength vnto the beast. &c.

These kinges with one consent and agreement of minde, euen as seruants rather the kinges, shall resigne all there strength and power to the beast, that is they shall warre vnder the Pope pay tribute vnto him, execute his commandements, as vassals shall acknowledge him for there Lord in all things. Who knoweth not that this was the state of the kinges of all Europe not many yeares agoe?

Act. 13. These shall fight with the lambe and the lambe shall overcome them, for he is lord of lords, and king of kinges. &c.

These shall after so flauish a maner serue the Pope, that he shall bring them forth into battaill against Christ, that they may studie by all meanes to restraine the light of the Gospell bristling forth, but yet beinge overcome of the Lambe, they shalbe brought vnder. whiche although in the humble shape of a seruaunte he be despised of the worlde, yet in the ende of the warre he will playnly shew that he is Lord of Lordes and kinge of kinges, whome no strength of man can resist.

And they that are on his side, are called, and chosen and faythfull. &c. Those whome they condemne for heretiques, Schismatiques, & wicked men, are called of God, because they were elected of him and they stande constantly in his faith, these shall warre vnder the banner of there capitayne, against tyrantes, and in spirituall battaill shall overcome them. But of this famous battaill and victorie of Christ, we shall heare shortly after in the 19. Chapter. In which after that the beast hath powred forth all his poison he shalbe at length apprehended and throwen headlonge into the lake whiche burneth with bymstone.

And

Verse. 14. And he sayd vnto me, the waters which thou sawest where the whore sitteth, are people, and folke, and nations, and tongues, &c.

THe Aungell saied in the beginnge of this Chapter, that the whore sat vpon many waters, now he expoundeth them to signifie diuers people, greate multitudes, sundrye nations and tongues, for this whore shall haue a large dominion almost ouer all Europe. And this is that vniuersall consent of nations, people and tongues, of whiche the papistes bragge so muche. I confesse that many nations conspire together into the loue and delightes of this whore. But shall it therefore be thought to be a Catholique Church?

Verse. 15. And the ten hornes which thou sawest vpon the beast are they which shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, &c.

THose ten kinges which were sometime subiect to the beast at length beinge instructed and taught by the gospell shall shake of her most filthy yoke. And they which before committed fornication with the Church of Rome and her abominable religiō, after that the light of the gospell is spronge vp, they shall clearly see and perceiue her desozmitie, they will hate her with deadly hatred. So that she which before was inuironed and garbed with so greate a bande of her louers, shall be forsaken of all and shall remaine desolate and solitary, then whiche nothinge can happen moze greuous or sozowfull to a harlot. For kinges shall bothe withdraue them selues, and also the people of there dominions, from her most abominable company. And also they shall spoyle her of hir riches, substance, ornaments, saier buildings, large possessions, and all the rest of her goodes, and shall dazine her naked forth of the doores.

And shall eat her fleshe and burne her with fier. &c. That is, they shall be enflamed with so greate hatred and lothinge of her filthyness, that they woulde euen rente and teare her with there teethe, and will curse her to extreme destruc-

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tion. And at the length they will wast & destroy with fier and sword, the city of Rome it selfe whiche is the sincke of all mischiefs.

Ierl. 17. For God hath put it in there hartes to fulfill his will, and to do with one consent for to giue there kingedome vnto the beast, vntill the swordes of God be fulfilled. &c.

That we may knowe that this whole matter is governed by God, he sheweth that it was done by the counsaile of God, that those kinges for a time shoulde applye themselues to the beast, and shoulde permit there kingedome to his will and pleasure. For as by the iust iudgement of God, Antichrist came into the worlde to seduce into destruction, the reprobate contemners of Christ and his gospell, so all the increase of his tyranny shall depend vpon Goddes will. Otherwise it semeth vncredible that kinges shoulde after so slauiſhe a manner submitte there neckes to the Popes yoke, but that God had blinded there mindes for there heynouse offences. But he teacheth that this subiection shall not bee perpetuall, but that it shall indure to that time onely whiche is appointed by the decrees and purpose of God.

Ierl. 18. And the woman which thou sawest is the great cite which reigneth ouer the kinges of the earth. &c.

Singe that all writers of the auncient primitive Church as many as haue weighed this sentence could vnderstand no other but the city of Rome, I greatly merueile with what face the papistes dare refuse this exposition. Yea verely when as no man can bringe anye other interpretation whiche hathe at the least anye likely hode of truth what shoulde we sticke any longer in it. To whome I pray ye, is this vnknownen, that the city of Rome euen then when John wrotte, had the dominion ouer the princes of the worlde? he coulde not therefore moze clerely euen by name haue sayed, Rome, then this periphrazis doethe signifye.

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THE Aungell promised to Ihon, that he would shewe not onely the misterie, but also the damnation of the great whoze, whiche he doth execute diligently in this chapter, describinge the vnrrecoverable ruine of Babylon.

Vers. 1. And after these thinges I sawe another Aungell come downe from Heauen, hauing great power. &c.

THis Aungell doth signifie the preachinge of the Gospell, whiche God in these last times hath sent downe from heauen, to reprehensive the impudencie of the great whoze, and to preache her moste certeyne ouerthrowe, whiche should neuer be repayed againe. This Aungell is indued with great power, whiche bringeth the vnrchaungeable decree of GOD, concerninge the subuersion of Babylon. And wee see withe what great zeale, freedom, and auctoritie, all the abominations of the Romish Church are reprehended by the faithfull ministers of the gospel.

And the earth was lightened with his glorie. &c. where as before was most thicke darkenesse, which couered þ whole kingdome of Antichrist, there the glorious light of the gospel hath shined, which hath driuen away all the mist of errours & ignorance from the eyes of the electe.

Vers. 2. And he cried oute mightely with a loude voice saying, it is fallen: it is fallen, Babylon the great citie, and is become the habitation of Devils, and the hold of all fowle spirits, and a cage of euerye vncleane and hatefull byrde. &c.

There is verie great vehemencie of euerye worde, that he preached not but cried out, & that strongly, with as great streyninge of voice as he could. For it becometh the mindes of men to be wakened, to the diligent considering of gods Judgements. Suche in time past semed the stablesse of Babylō to be, when as it was on euerye side holden vp with þ strength of kinges and mightie men, that men thought it should neuer be subiecte to anye fall or ruine. The aungell therefore crieth

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with

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with a lowde voice, that she is fallen, she is fallen, euen Babylon, althoughe she were neuer so great and trustinge to her owne fortresses. The Church of Rome therefore may neuer looke for any repayninge of her ruines, for shee is fallen, she is fallen euen the west Babylō, and shall neuer be restored againe, for those thinges shalbe performed vpon the Sinagoge of Rome, whiche were prophesied of olde Babylon, by Esay the thirteenth Chapter, and Ieremie 51. Because if there shall remayne any broken peces of the buyldinges amonge the heapes of herdes and rubbishe, they shall not be left for any hope of restoring, but to the greater horreur: for in those desert and solitarie houses, shall Igm, and Ohim dwell, that is spirits and Goblins: Ostriches shall there make there nestes, & the Sarpentes shall daunce there, Woles shall crye, the Serpentes shall hisse, Dragons shall wallow and tumble there, and horrible in deede shalbe the face of all thinges in that place. which the Angell hath expressed in the verie same sense, and almost in the same wordes, when as he sayeth that Babylon shalbe an habitation of Devils, a holde of all fowle spirites, and a cage of euerie vncleane and hatefull byrde. When the Gospel therefore is preached concerning the ouerthrow of Babylō, whatsoeuer remayneth in it, after the seruantes of god are called out, we ought not to count the for any other, which reioyce to dwell in such desolate places then for deuils, fowle spirites & all vncleane birdes. Whereouer we may playnlye see before our eyes an Image of Babylon destroyed, in temples, monasteries ouerthrowen. who would euer haue beleued, y so great buildinges, so beautifull palaces, so great riches and treasures should be layd wast, & brought into so great desert: but y voice of the Angell foretolde this, it is no doubt therefore, but y the same end remayneth for all y reliques & all reuants of babylō.

Ierl. 7. For all nations haue droncke of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the Kinges of the earth haue committed fornication with her, and the marchantes of the earth are waxed riche of the abundaunce of her pleasures. &c.

If any peradventure mighte thinke y Babylon deserved not grieuouse punishmentes, that she should be broken with destruction

destruction which should neuer be restozed, he rendereth a reason of the most iust iudgement, because with her poisoned art, and bewitchinge cup she hath seduced the people of all nations to idolatry, and also she hath procured all the kings of the earth to fornication and hath inticed them into spirituall whooredome beinge smothely handled by her twothe trickes, and to conclud she is so giuen to her prodigall pleasures and intemperance, that all the merchants of the earth are made ricke by her excessiue pleasure. Who is so blinde that he seeth not all these offences to ouerflowe in the Church of Rome? where is there suche excess, where is there such insatiable couetousnes: where are there so greate deceiptes and iudginge castes? and to bee shorte where is there moze filthyer & moze abominable defiling of diuine religion, then in poperye? Wherfore therefore she falleth into that destruction, apoynted her of God:

Wers. 4. And I herde an other voice from heauen saying, come awaye from her my people, that ye be not partaker of her sinnes, and that ye receiue not of her plagues. &c.

It maye be demaunded, what there shoulde neede any other voice, when as that Angell that a litle before descended from heauen might haue pronounced the same thinges. Pra bereiue the exhortation followinge is of so greate weighe, and worthy so diligent attention, that it becometh to be published with a new voice sent from heauen, and we must obserue, as well in this booke, as in other propheties as in Clape the 40. Chapter that as ofte a voice is said to be hearde withoute anye author seene, a matter of greate weighe, and whiche is to be receiued with deepe consideration, is signified suche as this most weighty admonitions, that the faithfull shoulde departe from the fellowshippe of the malignant Church, least if they be made partakers of her sinnes, they shoulde also be wrapped in her tormentes, and bereiue this heavenly voice requirith three thinges of the true worshippers of God, of whiche the firste is, that they shoulde departe farre awaie from her fellowshippe, the seconde

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that they should take due vengeance vpon her, the thirde that they should reioyce with the whole affection of hart, and magnifye the name of God for her irreuererable fall. But as concerninge that which pertaineth to the first admonition, the holy ghost alludeth to the exhortation of the prophete Ieremie in the Chapter. 51. Verse. 45. Whiche with the same wordes, speaketh to the people of God, that they would departe out of the midst of east Babylon, if they would prouide for there life and safetie. But here the heauensly voice commaundeth not only to flie the place, but especially to take heed of her sinnes: least if they should fauour and flatter them selves in her wickednesse, it might come to passe, that they should be also punished with her tormentes.

Vers. 5. For her sinnes are come vpto heauen, and God hath remembered her iniquities. &c.

HE sheweth that the time is not now to be differed, because without delaye God will take most grieuous punishmentes vpon her. For her sinnes are gone vp euen vnto heauen, as the enormities of the Sodomites, and her vnrightheousnesse, hath put God in remembrance of his righteousness. that he can no longer suffer so great and cruell iniuries vnraged. we are here admonished, that grieuous transgressions, and great sinnes, do require a swift vengeance from heauen. Moreover howe dangerous a thinge it is to haue fellowship with the wicked, whose heynous sinnes drawe the vengeance of God vpon there heades. Let vs therefore as the prophete Ieremie warneth vs, flie farre withoute the circuit of Gods wrath, which hangeth ouer the whole region of Babylon.

Vers. 6. Reward her euen as she hath rewarded you, and geue her double according to her workes: & in the cup that she hath filled to you, fille her the double. &c.

The next thing which god requireth of his seruants, is, that after the abomination of the whoze is disclosed, that they would shew themselves ministers of the most Iust vengeance of God, in tormenting her, in miserable manner, rewarde her,
sayeth

saith he, enen as she hath rewarded you. And the psalm, 137 pronounceth them blessed, which shall render to Babylon the same thinges which she cruelly committed against the people of God. we must not therefore spare her, but rather her vengeance is to be doubled, according to the measure of her sinnes, and the crueltie, which she exercised vpon the holy martyres of God. she is to be punished with double tormentes. Since therefore and Magistrates shall see, which through too much gentleness do not punish her wickednesse, what they will answer to god; when they shall be accused of the neglects of this commandement.

Perf. 7. In as muche as she glorified her selfe, and liued in pleasure, so much greeue to her torment & sorow.

He teacheth that it is most equall and right, that by howe much greater pride, & presumptiō she hath extolled her self, with so much greater infamy she should be reproched, & loke how much more the abominable whoze hath applied her selfe to riote and intemperance, by so muche more grieuous tormentes and punishments, her wantonnesse should be restrained. Therefore here is no place of mercy, but her sinnes are to be weighed in the equall balance of Justice, with her tormentes, and loke whatsoever she hath deserved, she oughte to suffer, withoute any fauour shewed at all. For it becommeth not vs to be liberrall of that which is none of our owne. God the eternall Iudge, hath geuen this sentence vpon her, whose sharpnes no mortall creature can mitigate or aswage. Let vs therefore hate Babylon as we oughte, with the greatest hatred, and with vehement and earnest prayers let vs desire her extreme destruction, whiche so long as she remaineth safe the Church of Christ whose felicitie wee oughte by all meanes to procure, can neuer flourish.

For she sayeth in her harte, I sit beinge a Queene, and am no widowe and shall see no mourninge. &c. He payneth oute her arrogancie, pride, and securitie, that shee saith, with her selfe, I sit beinge a Queene, that is, I rule ouer

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all men as the Ladie of the worlde, and I am no webowe, which am garde d and compassed about with so great a multitude of loners, I am touched with no feare of desolatiō, which am the spouse of Christ, the Catholique & Apostolike Church, against which the gates of hell shall not preuaile and therefore I shall neuer be partaker of mourning and sorow. After this manner glorierh the malipart whoze, but all these thinges shall vanish into smoke, when God shall require at her handes the bloud of his holy martires.

Uers. 8. Therefore shall her plagues come at one daye, death and sorow, and famine, and she shall be burnte with fire, &c.

He alludeth to the prophecie of Esay concerning the old babylon in the 47. Chapt. signifying that God will sodainly beate downe her pride, brydle her riote, and shake of her securitie. Bpcause she shalbe oppressed with diuers calamities, and those comming vpon her at once as with death, famine, & sorow, and at length euen as it were appointed to extreme & better destruction, she shall burne with fire.

For strong is the Lord God which will condemne her. &c. If any mā at the beholding of her present estate should thinke that it could not come to passe that so great strength, riches & dignitie, could vanish away to naught: he setteth the strength of God against them all which seeing he hath condemned her to suche destruction, he will throwe downe all her loftinesse, breake all her strength, and treade all riches vnder foote, that the sentence which he hath pronounced against her maye take place.

Uers. 9. And the kinges of the earth shall bewaile her, and lament for her, which haue committed fornication and liued in pleasure with her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, &c.

The horrible fall of Babylon, mighte bee set as it were before our eyes, there are brought in kinges, marchantes, and mariners bewayling her, & as many as vnder her defence haue liued a voluptuose and carelesse life. In the first place kinges and noble men, which vnder her protection gaue them selues to wanton pleasures and delightes, do take it grienous

sey that they are called by the voice of the Gospell, to embrace righteounesse and temperance, when they shall see the smoke of her burninge, they wepe, and after a womanlye manner bewayle her fall.

Uers. 10. And shall stand a farre off for feare of her torment, saying alas, alas, the great citie Babylon the mightie citie, for in one hower is thy Iudgement come. &c.

Although they loued her, & wished that she might remayne safe for euer yet through the feare of her tormentes they shall stande a farre off and shall acknowledge the Iust Iudgement of God vpon her, saying, alas that notable citie Babylon, that most mightie citie, howe soone hast thou fallen from so hyghest degree of happinesse? this verely is euen the Iudgement of God bycause thou wast sufficientely furnished against all the force and strength of man. We are taughte here that verie tyrantes and hypocrites do acknowledge the hande of God in subuerting Babylon, and yet are not conuerted to God, but being in despayer, do bewayle the ruine of that citie which they confesse to be overthrowen by the Iust Iudgement of God for her wickednesse.

Uers. 11. And the marchauntes of the earth shall wepe and bewayle her, for no man byeth there ware any more. &c.

After the bitter complaints of the Kinges, and Princes, nowe follow the dolefull songes of the marchauntes, which bewayle Babylon not so muche for any loue they haue towardes her, as for the losse of there owne gaine. Bycause no man here after will bye there most precious wares, after the destruction of this riche Citie. And by these marchauntes are understoode not onely the petie marchauntes which were wont to sell suche kinde of pedlinge marchaundize to the Idelates, to maintaine the riote and in temperaunce of the Church of Rome: but also the great Bysshopes, Idelates, and priests the selues, whiche had all the ceremonies of there Church set to sayle, where vpon they heaped vp to them selues infinite riches. But after þ vnprofitablenesse of there warres was made manifest by the preaching of the Gospell there sayes a mar-

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lets ware colde and at length they shall finde no man, whiche will bestow vpon suche baggage and triflinge toys, so muche as a dogkine, or a rotten nut. Not without iust cause therefore they wepe and lament, because the hope of such sweete gaines is now all taken from them.

Uers. 12. The ware of gold, and siluer, and of precious stone, and of pearls, and of fine linen, and of purple, and of silk, and of scarlet and of all manner of thine wode, and of vessels of puerpe, and all vessels of most precious wode, and of brasse & of iron, and of marble. &c.

It is maruaile that they shoulde complaine that these wares shold be no moze saleable, seing they were neuer had in greater pprice, then after the fall of Babylō. But the meaning is, that all these thinges are esteemed no moze as they were the merchandise of the church of Rome, that is in masses, in images, in the theatricall or player like shewes of these temples, and in other papisticall ceremonies, so; other wise, gold, precious stones and purple are esteemed in there olde pprice. But chalices, crosses, images, miters of goulde, siluer, and pearles, are not embraced with there wonted reuerence. Copes, vestiments, and other tragicall garmentes wrought of fine linen, silk, purple, and scarlet are despised, neither do they daill the eyes of men as in time past. The other ornaments, and instrumentes of temples, monasteries, and idols of puerpe, cedar, cypresse, of brasse, iron and marble, are troden downe, despised and broke in peeces.

Uers. 13. And of sinamon, and obours, and oynments, & frankincense and wine and oyle, and fine flower, and wheat, and beasts, and shepe, and horses, & chariots, and bodies and soules of men.

No man doth now desire the perfume of Frankensence, cinomon, & other spices, with which they did perfume the temples and idols. No man requireth the oynments and oyle to baptize, to confirme, to ordeyne, and to bury men. No man requesteth of them wine to washe altares, to hotsell laye people, and to heale the chincough and other infirmities of the throte. All men despise there God made of fine flower, no man preparerth wheat, oren, or shepe to fede ther stouthfull belies; yea herely to be byrse they might sterue, except they shoulde provide so; themselves. The horses the chariots, and the slaues, ser

uings

ning either to the necessarie vse of intemperance of the prelates, they the selues seeing they are spoiled of all there goodes, will not buy, neither will other men buy the to geue vnto the after the manner of flatterers. Lastly, no mā will buy of them, by indulgences, masses, merites, and workes of supererogatio, the soules of men which are the best cheape marchandize amonge the, which neuertheles Christ purchased with his blood. Here of are those reares, hereof come mourninges & betwailings of the papistes, hereof springeth that fretting & fuming against the doctrine of the gospell, which if it would bring the the like gaine they would not be altogether so loze to change it for popish religion. More over that he numbeth the soules of men also among the wares, we easely vnderstande of what Church he speaketh. For neuer any other heresie hath set the soules of men to sale, besides poperie. And also all other marchandize which haue place in popish religion, do sufficiently shewe the condition of the same.

Item. 14. And the apples which thy soule lusted after, are departed from thee, and all thinges which were fat and excellent, are departed from thee, and thou shalt finde them no more. &c.

NOW he turneth his tale to babylon her self, for more hea-
hemerie sake, as if he should say, not onely those precious
wares shall cease to be in price among men, but also the sweet
apples which thou hast lusted after with thy whole harte are
departed fro the, & all thinges which were fat, & excellent are
departed from thee, and thou shalt neuer finde them any more.
Nothing could happen more grievous or sorrowfull to a har-
lotte that is drownd in riote and excesse, then that all her dili-
cate delights & pleasures, in which she so greatly sported her
selfe are shaken of fro her. This is therefore the greatest tor-
ment to the Babilonicall whore, that she whiche a lile before
flowed in such abundance of all thinges whiche she abused to
intemperance, that in riote she could compare with Cleopatra
Queene of Egypt, now being naked and deserte should be op-
pressed with the scarcitie of all thinges that are good.

Item. 15. 16. The merchants of these thinges which were waxed riche shall
stand a far of fro her, for feare of her torment weeping & saying, & say a-
las, alas, & great citie, that was clothed in fine linnē, & purple. &c.

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VWoe will blame there sorowe, which by her fall also are depriued of so far gaine: for they which by her abundance are made riche, by her fall also are broughte to neede and powertie. Therefore they crie, they yell, they howell, yet neuerthelesse they departe farre from her burninge, least they should bee made partakers of her tormentes. But they shall not escape the hande of God which at length will catche them. Here is described the nature of the papistes, which althoughe they dearely loue there mother the Church, for gaine, & pleasures sake, yet they flie from her torment as much as they can, denying her forswearing, and cursinge her from the mouth forwarde, yet they are sorowfull within, bewaylinge her fall, & sayinge, alas, alas, that great Citie, whiche was beautifull ye clothed in fine linnen, and purple, and skarlat, gold, precious stones, and pearles, how soone so great riches are brought into desolation. If any man heare the Monkes, the Priestes, or other papistes of the same rabblement, bewayling the ruines of there monastries, or temples: they do almost with the same voices testifie there sorow. They reckon vp with great bitterness of sorowe the riches, the ornamentes and there beantie, and chiefly they do not forget there owne commoditie, which they miserablye complayne to be taken from them, nowe that these things are destroyed. But they are wretched men, which no man doth pittie because when Babylon stode in her glory, they filled the whole world with pride, concouisnesse, lecherie, crueltie, and Idolatrie. woorthely therefore they suffer the punishmentes of so great enormities, if they walke destitute and and needie of all thinges, and also if they them selues feeble the tormentes which they prepared for others.

Jerl. 17. 18. For in one hower so great riches are come to desolation, and euery shipmaister: and all the people that occupie shippes: & shipmen & whosoever traualle on the sea, shall stande a farre of and crie when they see the smoke of her burning: saying: what citie was like vnto this great Citie. &c.

The destruction of Babylon is not knowne vpon the earth onely, but it is so great that it is beholdeu also fro the sea.
The

The gouernours of shippes therefore and all the multitude of people that occupie shippes, whiche were wounte to carie ouer wares by whole nanies, when they shall beholde a face of out of the sea, the smoke of her burninge: they shall acknowledge that her vtter destruction is come, & therefore they shall erie out for sorowe, bewayling her fall and saying, what citie was like to this great Citie, or deserved to be compared with it? O miserable destruction of so great and so riche a Citie.

Uers. 19. And they shall cast dust on there heades, and crye wepinge and wayling and say, alas, alas, the great Citie, wherein were made riche all that had shippes on the sea, by her costlinesse, for in one hower she is made desolate. &c.

This was a signe of the greatest mourning among the Hebrewes, when they cast dust and ashes vpon there heades. The holy ghost would expresse vnder this figure, the sorowe of those, whiche in the fall of Babylon. complayne that there gaine is also fallen awaye. Therefore here are broughte in shipmen cryinge, wepinge, and mourninge, for the hope of gaine whiche is taken away: after that Babylon, by whose costlinesse were all made riche, as manye as did carie wares with shippes, is broughte into dust and ashes. And the complaints of all those that mourne are to this ende, that the horrible destruction of the fall of Babylon might be set before our eies.

Uers. 20. O heauen reioyce of her, and ye holpe Apostles, and Prophetes: for God hath geuen your Iudgement on her. &c.

VVe sayed before that the holy ghost required 3. thinges of the faithfull in the fall of Babylon, whereof this is the last, & they should reioyce, for her destructiō, & giue thanks to god, that he is reuenged vpon her vngodlines, & chiefly vpon her crueltie against the saintes, he exhorteth therefore the heauen it selfe, that is all those, which are in heauen for & greater vehemencie of speache, and the holy Apostles of Christ and the prophetes, that is the preachers of his holy Gospell, that they should reioyce, be glad, and triumphe, for & vengeance, which

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is taken vpon babylon. Bycause that altogether for a time God seemeth to forget his seruantes, whiles the whoze being made druncken with the shoude of the godlye, dyd sit like a Quene in her seate, and shoulde make the holpe martyries of God subiecte to all kindes of tormentes: nowe at length god hath taken vengeance on her wickednesse, for the reuenge of the saintes. woorthely therefore ought the saintes to reioyce, as many as do either abhorre her crueltie, or that do acknowledge and reuerence the Justice of God, in her iust tormentes. For we ought not to be moued with anye pitie of there calamitie, whome we confesse to be condemned by the sentence of the most righteous God.

Jerl. 21. Then a mightie aungell, toke vp a stone like a great millston, & cast it into the sea, saying, with such violence shall the great citie Babylon be cast, and shalbe found no more. &c.

In the fiftie and one Chapter of Ieremie the Prophete doth scale by the prophetic concerning the destruction of old Babylon with the like signe. He commaunded Sberatah a certain godly prince which should go to Babyls, that he should bind a stone to the booke of that prophetic, and should caste it into the midst of Euphrates sayinge, after this maner shall Babylon be drowned and shall not rise from the emill that I will bring vpon her. To which place without doubt the holy ghost alludeth in this vision, sauinge that in all the circumstances there is a greater Emphasis. For here not a man, but a mightie Aungell, whose force doth farre excede the strength of man, toke vp a stone, not a litle one, but a verie great one like as it were a millstone, and cast it not into a riuer, but into the sea, speaking these woordes before, with suche violence shall the great citie Babylon bee cast downe and shalbe founde no more. And this is put for the enerlastinge comforte of the godlye, that they mighte quietly trinnphe of her destruction because all hope of restoringe papistrie is utterly taken away.

Jerl. 22. And the voice of harpers and musicians and of pipers and trumpeters shalbe heard no more in thee, and no crafts man of whatfoerer craft he be, shalbe found any more in thee. & the sound of a millston shalbe heard no more in thee. &c.

That he may teache that a perpetuall desolation should be broughte vpon Babylon, he reckoneth vp all those thinges which are wont to serue for an ornament and vse to wealthie, and rich cities. Neuer, sayeth he, shall the voice of singers be heard, or of them whiche handle Instrumentes of musike, so that whatsoeuer thinges serue for there pleasure are taken awaye. Neither shall there euer be found in her, the artificer of any arte: By this meanes whatsoeuer pettepne to the vse of a ciuill honest life, are taken awaye: Lastly the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more in her, so all the aydes of necessarie sustenance are wanting, what remaineth therefore, but horrible solitarinesse.

Uer. 13. 14. And the lighte of a candle shall shine no more in thee, and the voice of the bridegrome and of the the bride shall be heard no more. &c.

No man shall dwell there whiche maye lighte a candle by righte, neither shall the voice of the bridegrome and of the bride be heard, there shall be no familie which shall euer go thither to dwell, there shall neuer be any mariages celebrated there, that for the hope of posteritie the citie mighte loke for some renewing, but for to solitude, silence, horour and confusion, shall for euer occupie and posses her.

Bycause thy marchauntes were the great men of the earth and with thy enchantements were deceyued all nations. And in her was found the bloud of the Prophetes and of the saintes and of all that were slayne vpon the earth. &c. The reasons are rendred wherefore God punished her so sharply. The first cause therefore is assigned to be conctousnes ioynd with pride, bycause her marchauntes seeking vn honest gaine, haue heaped together infinite riches with whiche beinge puffed vp they would be counted for kinges, and princes in the world. who knoweth not howe great were the riches of Cardinals, Bysshopes, Abbotes, and of other prelates: and howe great dignitie haue they chalenged to them selues? the second reason is giuen that with the witcheries and inchauntementes of peruerse doctrine, they seduced all nations into error. And
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who is ignorant? with what lyes they bewitched the mindes of men, that they might make all obedient, and addicte vnto them. Lastlye to whome is it not manifest, howe great a slaughter the synagog of Ierome hath made of the prophetes, and sainctes? so that it doth worthely agree vnto her which Christ sayd vpon Ierusalem, that all the righteous blood which was shed, fro the blood of Iust habell, eue to the ende of the world, ought to be required at her handes.



¶ The nynetenth Chapter.



Like as he are by compa the fall scribed uenly abolished, Christ shall no lastly is prophesied, the and his Gospel. after w damnation.

Uers. 1. And after these multitude in heauen say
rie and honour & p

The holy ghost a lile before exhorted the heane and au tnat dwell therein that they shoulde reioyce with gladnes for the fall of Babylō. Now therefore John heareth a great voice in heauen, of whose which reioysed were glad and song eternall praises to God, for the sharpenesse of his Iudgement, whiche he hath

he hath shewed forth against the whore. whiles the Papistes therefore mourne, wepe & howle for þe ruine of there most deare mother the sinagoge of Rome, there is one voice of the whole church of Christ, wherwith they being wholly filled wth heauenly ioye reioyce for them selues, and geue thankses to God for the destruction of the abominable whore. And this vercielye is there triumphing song, Halleluiab, saluation, glorie, honour, and power be to the Lord our God, the Hebrew woorde Halleluiab is a voice that doeth exhorte stirring vp to praise God, afterwarde they expresse by what meanes god is praised, verciely, if to him alone all our saluation be attributed, if all honour, glorie, and power, of beginning, conuincing and persutting of this most magnificall worke, be ascribed to God alone.

Act. 1. For true and rightcoule are his Iudgement. &c.

Least they shoulde seeme rashly and without cause of great ioye to reioyce, as common the people are often wont to do the remounde what abundant matter of gladnesse is offered

accused the office of a true and iust sednes of the great whore. He deserued destruction, whiche shee the same, she accused God & him in a while after it had fallen vpon felt that god is true, which admo-repent. But when she despised the would make no end of committing killing, at the length, she knewe by of God, which can not alwaies sus- sinnes vntreued.

the great Whore which did cor- ruption and hathe auenged the ed by her hande. &c. Bycause he

hath pronounced the iurre of eternall dāuation, against þe most impudēt & shamelesse harlotte þe Church of Rome, which wth for- nicatiō, aswell spirituall as corporall hath corrupted þe whole earth, so þe their hath scarce remayned any corner pure frō her

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who is ignorant: with what lyes they bewitched the mindes of men, that they might make all obedient, and addicte vnto them. Lastlye to whome is it not manifest, howe great a slaughter the synagog of Isome hath made of the prophetes, and saintes: so that it doth worthely agree vnto her which Christ sayd vpon Ierusalem, that all the righteouse blood which was shed, fro the blood of Iust habell, euē to the ende of the world, ought to be required at her handes.



¶ The nynetenth Chapter.



Like as in the former chapter there are brought in Kinges, marchauntes & the companie of shipmen, miserably bewaplinge the fall of Babylon: so in this Chapter is described the ioye, & exultation of all the heauenly orders, that nowe when the whoze is abolished, Christ shall nowe shortlye be ioyned to his spouse. Lastly is prophecied, the last battell of Antichrist against Christ and his Gospell, after which at length followeth his eternall damnation.

Act. 1. And after these things I heard a great voice of a great multitude in heauen saying, halleluyah, saluation, and glorye and honour & power, be to the lord our God. &c.

The holy ghost a litle before exhorted the heauē and all that dwell therein that they shoulde reioyce with gladnes for the fall of Babilō. Now therefore John heareth a great voice in heauen, of those which reioysed were glad and song eternall praises to God, for the sharpenesse of his Iudgement, whiche he hath

he hath shewed forth against the whore. whiles the Papistes therefore mourne, wepe &oule for þe ruine of there most deare mother the sinagoge of Rome, there is one voice of the whole church of Christ, wherwith they being wholly filled wth heauēly ioye reioyce for them selues, and geue thanckes to God for the destruction of the abominable whore. And this verie lyfe is there triumphing song, Halleluiab, saluation, glozie, honour, and power be to the Lord our God, the Hebrew woorde Halleluiab is a voice that doeth exhorte stirring vp to praise God, afterwarde they expresse by what meanes god is praised, verely, if to him alone all our saluation be attributed, if all honour, glozie, and power, of beginning, continuing and perfitting of this most magnificall worke, be ascribed to God alone.

Act. 1. For true and rightcoule are his Judgement. &c.

Last they shoulde seeme rashly and without cause of great ioye to reioyce, as common the people are often wont to do they expounde what abundant matter of gladnesse is offered vnto them, that God hath executed the office of a true and iust Judge, in reuēging the wickednes of the great whore. Be often times threathned her, the deserued destruction, whiche shee deserued bycause he differred the same, she accused God & his prophetes of lying, but when a while after it had fallen vpon her head, she perceyued and felt that god is true, which admonished her that she should repent. But when she despised the admonitions of God, and would make no end of committing to hooredome, rauening, and killing, at the lenger, she knewe by proofe the Iust Judgement of God, which can not alwaies suffer so cruell and monstrous sinnes vnuenged.

For he hath condemned the great Whore which did corrupte the earth with her fornication and hath auenged the blood of his seruantes shed by her hande. &c. Bycause he hath pronounced the sentēce of eternall dānation, against þe most impudēt & shamelesse harlotte þe Church of Rome, which wth fornicatiō, aswell spirituall as corporall hath corrupted þe whole earth, so þe their hath scarce remained any corner pure frō her

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Which continually slew the seruants of God the martirs of Christi
dayly with the fier and sweoꝛoe, and erquisite tormentes, euen as
it were shepe appoynted to the slaughter: whose most innocent
bloude he hath now by good righte reuenged, whereas he hathe
condemned her to eternall tormentes.

Act. 3. And againe they sayed Halleluiah. &c.

These heauenly spirites do not once onely but with often re-
peated voices singe praises to God, and they stirre vp and
proue all others also to yeald the same obedience to the Lord.
We see therefore that they celebrate the name of God withoute
any irksomnes or wearines at all, which burne wth a sincere loue
towards him: that the blessed orders of heuenly spirits do satisfie
themselves wth no praises or thanckes geuing, y^t they may shew
themselves not to be vnthankfull, for the benefit receiues of the
deliuey of the Church from the defilings, & cruelty of the great
whoꝛe. We bee here admonished of oure duetye, that we are
bound with the vnweari ed studie and induoure to magnifye the
infinite goodnes of god, both for all other his benefits bestowed
vpon vs, and also chiefly for the lighte of the Gospell spronge
vp vnto vs, whereby the cloudes of poperye beinge daylye
more and more bryuen a way, the western Babylon is brought
very nere to utter ruine.

And the smoke of her torments rose vp for euermore. &c.
Euen here the heauenly spirites gathered to themselves sounde
matter to ioy quietly that they see the smoke of Babylon being
set on fier, ascend vp for euer, when God hathe deliuered her vp
to be tormented with the euerlasting tormentes of hell fier.
We maye learne here that the hope of the popishes concerninge
the restoring of the dignity of there Church is but vaine, whose
juste condemnation when we knowe by the wooꝛde of God,
we are taughte by the same wooꝛde, that her burninge shall be
for euer.

Act. 4. And the foure and twenty elders, and the foure beasts
fell downe and worshipped God that sat on the thron
sayinge Amen Halleluiah. &c.

We haue often noted before, with how great reuerences y^t ho-
norable

norable senate of the 24. elders, with the foure Cherubicall beastes, do come to celebrare the glorie of God. For they fall vpon there faces, whereby they acknowledge them selues to be unworthy, which should magnify, and set forth the honour of god, they cast downe there crownes, & bowing downe worship god, whiche sitteth vpon the seate of maiestie & glorie for euer. which thing as we see, they do in this place. After therefore & they haue testified there humilitie to such submission as was meete, they aunswere to the most holy song of the angels, which they song in the name of & whole Church, Amen, Halleluiah. By which truely they do signifie, & they desire nothing more in there mindes with ardent prayers, then that god alone may haue his soūd & perfect glorie, & & all may acknowledge, what a bēefite god bestowed vpon his church, whē he toke vengeance vpon the great whore. And therefore these do also exhort all the faithfull to ascribe praise, glorie, honour & power to God alone. This voice Halleluiah so often repeated, doth teach that the desire to praise God is casely slacken of among vs, excepte one of vs often stirre vp an other to this office.

Uers. 5. Then a voice came out of the throne saying praise our god all ye his seruantes, & ye that feare him both small and great.

This voice proceeded either frō the 4. beastes which beare vpon the throne of God, or els from those infinite millions of Angels, which compas the throne aboute admonishinge, that god is to be extolled with due praises, of all his seruāts which feare him vnsinedly whether they be small, or great. As many therefore as will be costed for the seruantes of god, ought not to be slothfull in this office, but to labour with indeuour, that his glorie may be celebrated through & whole earthe. For this voice doth speake aswell to the great, as the small, & is of what state or condition soeuer they shalbe, least any might suppose & he should be free from this office. Afterwarde it also teacheth, who are in verie dede the seruantes of God, when as in stede of an exposition he added, this, they & feare & reuerence his commandments frō there hart. All do in words acknowledg god to be there father & lord, but as the Lord doth expostulate, with

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the Iewes in the first Chapter of mathewe. If I be father where is mine honour: if I be a Lord where is my seare: so this voice by the seare of God definith his seruants.

Act. 6. And I heard like a voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of stronge thundringes, saying hal-
leluiah, for our lord god almighty hath reeined. &c.

This voice which he hath described so diligently semeth, that it was y^e voices of all y^e heavenly companies, ioyned in one with this acclamation concluding y^e songe and saying, halluiah for our lord god almighty hath raigned the whole church being taught of our sauour Chyist doth desire y^e kingdome of God may come, when as all his enemies beinge vanquished y^e dominioⁿ of God alone may excell in the sight of all creatures. The heavenly voice doth testifie, y^e kingdome hath now come, when as the Church of Antichyist beinge abolished & destroyed, God alone dothe rainge in the congregation of the faithfull, because now the subuersion and ouerthzone of all the enemies of God & his church is at hand, when as a litle after the beast beinge overcome in battell is apprehended, and the deuill him selfe at length rogether wth the beast and the false prophete is thynowen hewⁿ dinge into the burninge lake of fier.

Act. 7. Let vs be glad and reioyce and geue glozy to him. &c.

Tour selues say they let vs reioyce for so happye a victo^ry, and let vs in the meane time with delectation vse our owne ioye, but let vs not forget to yelde due honour to God if we aske what new cause of ioye there is 2. the aunswere.

For the mariage of the lambe is come, and his wife hathe made her selfe readye. &c. For now the time is at hande, that Chyiste maye bringe the Church whiche he espoused in time past to be his wife, home to his house, and the Church euen now aboute to come into the most acceptable embracinges of her deare spouse, dothe adorne and decke her selfe, that she may receiue him when he cometh accordinge to his dignitie we are admonished here, that what space of time soener shall be remayne to the Church, from the destruction of the Synagoge of Antichyiste, euen to the ende of the
two, the

woyld that the same is graunted vnto her, that she beinge betwixt
rifullye adorned with faith, godlines, and innocency of life, may
come forth into his presence, whiche thinge I woulde to God
we all diligently considered, y^e the most filthy garmentes of the
fleshe beinge cast a way, we may garnish our soules with y^e new
ornaments of righteousness and holines, y^e we may be prepared
to go forth to mete Christ in what holwer soeuer he shall come,

Act. 8. And vnto her was graunted that she should be araied
with pure fine linen and shininge, for the fine linen is the
righteousnes of the saintes. &c.

That the Church should not come forth naked, or couered
with toyne garmentes, seing of her selfe, she hath no clencle-
nes or shininge beuty, he she weth that mariage garmentes are
otherwise prepared for her. For by the gift of God she is decked
with fine linen pure shininge, whiche are y^e righteousness of the
saintes that is those good woorks which are the testimonies of a
liuely faith. For after that all the spots of the Church are wa-
shed a waye in the bloude of the lambe, she is clothed with new
righteousnes also, that she studieth to please God by good wo-
kes, and thzoughe Christ, her obedience is acceptable to God al-
though it be vnperfect.

Act. 9. Then he saied vnto me write, blessed are they which
are called vnto the lambes supper, and he saied vnto
me these wordes of God are true. &c.

We haue sayed often, that as ofte as John is commaunded to
commit any thinge to writinge, after that sit it commaun-
dement, whiche he receiued in the beginninge that he shoulde
write whatsoeuer thinges he saw, that it is a matter of great
weight which ought diligently to be weighed and considered of
vs. When the heauenly voice therefore pronounceth them bles-
sed, which are called to the supper of the lambe he signifyeth that
they are happy, which by the preachinge of the gospell are called
to the partakinge of the heauenly life, so that they themselues
do acknowledge there oⁿe happines. Which how great it is
it shall the perfectly appeare, whē the day shall come, whiche is
apointed for y^e celebratinge of the mariage of the lambe, and in y^e
he repeateth that these wordes of God are true, he doeth therfore

h. iij.

that

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¶ with a most waightie affirmatiō he might scale this doctrine concerning the felicitie of those which are made partakers of the calling of the gospel & verely we haue to much experience how necessarie this sealing is, when we see such prophane contempt of the Gospel euerie where to abounde.

¶ *Uers. 10.* And I fell before his feete to worship him, but he sayd vnto me see thou do it not I am thy fellow seruant and one of thy brethren, which haue the testimonie of Iesus, worship God, for the testimonie of Iesus is the spirit of the Prophecie. &c.

S Ihon doth not dissemble his owne fall, seeing ¶ a profitable doctrine to the Church should follow thereof. For there was so great dignitie of person in the Angell, that Ihon was redie prepared to giue to him diuine honour. But the Angell suffred not the glorie, which is due vnto God to be transferred into him selfe, for he confesseth that he is not his Lord, but his fellow seruant, and one of his brethren, which beare testimonie of Christ. That god alone therefore is to be worshipped & not he, and therefore he declareth, that he is one of those whom god doth vse, to reuele his miseries to the prophetes, whiche they should exponnd to other men, for the testimonie of Iesus is the spirit of prophecie in bothe. For to this ende of marke are all propheties referred, and that onely is the true spirit of prophecie, which leaderth vnto Christ. Of what sorte therefore is the spirit of the popish doctrine, which alwayes leaderth vs away from Christ vnto creatures, when as the Angell being a most excellent creature, so earnestly refused the honour offered vnto him. Shall wee therefore worship Images, Crosse, and reliques, seeing it is such abominable wickednesse to worship the Angels them selues.

¶ *Uers. 11.* And I sawe heauen open, and beholde a white horse and he that sat vpon him was called faithfull and true, and he iudgeth, and fighteth righteously. &c.

Now remayneth the last battayle to be foughte against the wicked, in which the strength and furniture of all the enemies being ouerthrowen and slaine Christ alone hath the victorie, and extreme tormentes are layed vpon the reprobate.

Ihon

Ihon therefore seeth the heauen open, from whence we looke for our Lord Iesus Christ, which with the breath of his mouth shall destroye Antichrist, and by the brightnesse of his coming shall abolishe him. And the white horse goeth oute of heauen, whiche representeth the ministrie of the Gospell pure and sincere from all the dregges, and spots of peruerse doctrine, whose office is to carie Christ, to this last battail which he will fighte against Antichrist. For by the preachinge of the gospell Antichrist is ouercome. Others by the white horse vnderstande the white cloude, in which Christ will come to iudgemente, but I thinke this vision is to be expounded not of iudgement, which is described in the next Chap. following, but of the victorie of Christ againste all his ennemies, whiche goeth immediatly befoze the last Iudgemente. He that sitteth vpon this horse is called faithfull, and true, for the helpe whiche he promiserh, he will bringe vnto his, hee bringeth in due time, and he Iudgerh and fighteth in righteousnesse, by cause hee hath not withoute Iust causes taken the warre in hande, as the Princes of the World, for lighte or no causes doe oftentimes take greate battailes in hande: But here he dothe nothinge rashely, nothinge headlonge, but all thinges with Iudgemente and accordinge to the rule of equitye. Therefore beinge prouoked wiche innumerable iniuries by Antichrist, hee proceadeth forth into battaile to vanquish and ouercome him.

*Vers. 12. And his eyes were as a flame
of fire. &c.*

The sharpnesse of his eyes is more percinge, then any fire, and maketh passage to it selfe euen vnto the innermoste, and depest thoughtes of the harte. No Hypocrisie therefore, no subtilties can deceyue the quicke sharpnesse of his sighte. If Antichrist sayne a thousande times that hee promoteth the glorie of God, and acknowledge Christ for his Kinge: Yet he shall neuer flie the iudgement of Christ, which will drawe all his dissimulation in to lighte.

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And on his head were manye crownes. &c. Antichrist of Rome against whō he proceedeth furnished vnto battaill with great sacriledge vsurped to him self many crownes as though he had all the rule alone in heauē, earth & hell. But Christ by good right of inheritaunce, hath his head crowned with many crownes, as he to whome the father hath graunted the rule of all thinge, as he himselfe witnesseth saying, all power is giue to me both in heauen and earth Matth. 28. Wee shall require vengeance of Antichrist because hee so trayterously vsurpeth the ensignes of his power, when as neuerthelesse he is endued with no diuine vertue or strength.

And he had a name written that no man knewe but himselfe. &c. when as he is partaker of the same essence, maiestie, and glozie, with the father, and the holy ghost, whiche dignitie no creature can by vnderstanding thoroughly comprehend, he is sayd to haue a name, whose force he alone, which is the wisdom of the father doth vnderstand. Except peradventure he allude to that saying of Christ in the 11. Chapter of Math. when he saith, that no man knoweth the sonne, but the father, neither that any man knoweth the father but the sonne, and they to whome the sonne will reueale him, yet the former exposition liketh me best.

Act. 13. And he was clothed in a garment dipte in bloude. &c.

They are deceyued as I Iudge which by the garment dipte in bloud, vnderstand the manhoode of Christ, in which by his bloud, he hath purchased the mercie and fauour of God towarde vs. For here Christ is described as a warriour, and Iudge, which hath put on suche armour as should make him terrible to his enemies. And it is a manifeste alluding to the vision of Eay Chapter 63. whiche bringeth in the Lorde, all bloudie and red by the slaughter of the Edomites, Christ there fore weareth a garment dipped in bloud, that he might thoroughly feare his aduersaries when as they are admonished by this signe what slaughters he made in time past vpon the enemies of his Church, that they maye knowe that the like or greater hangeeth ouer there neckes.

And

And his name is called the woorde of God. &c. Befeore he sayd that his name was knowne to him selfe alone, nowe hee sheweth that he is called the woorde of God. Therefore we maye vnderstande the former name, of his incomprehensible essence, but this name of his office, in as much as he doth vouch safe to reueale him selfe vnto vs in the person of the mediator. He is therefore that woorde of God begotten of the father before all woordes, which in the time determinate by the heauenlye counsell, was made man, and wroughte the wonderfull worke of mans redemption in our fleche.

Uers. 14. And the warriors which were in heauen followed him vpon white horses, clothed with fine linnen white & pure.

Although alone he treadeth the wine sat of Gods wrath, as we are taught in the next verse folowing, and alone is of mighte to subdue his enemies, yet hee ioynerh to him selfe companions of warre, enen all the heauenlye Armies, that is the faithfull ministers of his Church, and professors of his Gospell, which he leadeth forth, not so much to beare part of the labour, as that he taketh them to the participation of the victorie. which we may easely perceyue by there deckinge, for after the maner of those that triumphe, they sit vpon white horses, and are clothed in fine linnen white and pure, whiche as we heard before are the righteousnesse of the Saintes, & whē they are indued with these ornaments, that is, with faith, and innocencie, they dare go forth into battell, as it were sufficiently armed against death and woundes.

Uers. 15. And out of his mouth went a sharpe sworde. &c.

This sworde as we also heard before in the first Chapt. signifieth the woorde of God, whose trueneth and certentie preceadeth oute of his mouthe: he teacheth therefore with what weapon Christ will fight against Antichrist, verely enen with a spirituall sword, by the preaching of his woorde: this place maketh that I can not fitly interpret this battaill of the last Iudgement. And S. Iohn to the Thessalons. Seemeth to foretell two degrees of his victorie, the one whereby he is slayne with the breath of Christs mouthe, the other when with the

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brightnesse of his coming he shalbe utterly abolished.

That with it he should smite the heathen: for he shall rule them with a rod of Iron: for he it is that treadeth the wine presse, of the fiercenesse and wrath of almighty God. &c. According to the prophetic of Dauid reciting the ordinance of god psalme 2. That he should smite the rebellious heathen; with a sword & should breake the raging people in peaces with an Iron rod, as it were the potters vessels. And Christ him selfe also is the ruine of the reprobate, which treadeth the wine presse of the wrath of almighty God, that is hee shall condemne all the reprobate, beinge ouercome by his power, to the eternall tormentes of hell. The emphasis of euery worde is here to be noted, which is put to terrifie the wicked. And he alludeth to the prophetic of Esay in the 63. Chap. concerning the slaughter of the Edomites, as we sayde before, in which Chapter of Esay, there are almost the same wordes concerning the treading of the wine presse.

Uers. 16. And he hath vpon his garments & vpon his thighe a name written, the kinge of kinges and Lord of Lordes. &c.

That all may acknowledge his innincible power, he hath a name openly writen in his garments and vpon his thighe, which declareth his maiestie and Dominion, verely that he is king of all kinges, and lord of all lordes. whosoever therefore challenge to them selues a kingdome or Lordship in the whole world, are his subiectes, but if that of there owne accorde, and willinglye they doe not acknowledge his rule ouer them, will they, nill they, they shalbe drawne to his obedienc. In vaine therefore is Antichrist proude wth the insolent titles of kingdome and Lordship, because hee must be made subiecte to the yoke of this chiefe and highest king of kinges. For he sitteth at the righte hande of God vntill all his enemies be made his foote stole, psalme. 110.

Uers. 17. And I sawe an Angel stande in the sunne who cried with a loude voice, saying to all the fowles that flied by the middest of heauen come and gather your selues together vnto the supper of the great God. &c.

It is wonte to be unlucky amonge men to singe the triumph befoze the victoꝝ, and the enemies as yet not beinge vanquished to thinke of the spoiles and the pray is ridiculous. But the matter is far otherwise in those battels whiche Christ fighteth. For he beinge alwaies sure of a happy end, may boldly triumph ouer his enemies. Like as this Aungell which exerciseth the office of a heralde takinge his place in the sunne, as it were in the middle market place of the world, or theater proclaimeth with a loude voice y^e victoꝝ of Christ obteyned against antichrist and that there shalbe made suche a slaughter of his aduersaries, that with greate diligence, he biddeth all the folowes as many as flye thꝛough the middelt of heauen, to the supper of the greate God, whiche he hath prepared for them wth so innumerable deade carcases of his enemies which are oꝛtherthowen.

Uers. 18. That ye may eat the fleshy of kinges, and the fleshy of the hygh captaynes, and the fleshe of the mighty men, and the fleshe of horses and the that sit on them, and the fleshe of all free men, and bonde men, and of smale and greate. &c.

That the folowes mighte knowe wth the holy deintye where they shoulde be welcomed in the supper of the greate God, the aungell nūbꝛeth vꝑ, that they shall be filled wth the fleshe of noble men, of kinges, of dukes, of stronge captaynes, of horsemen and of horses, and moꝛeouer wth the carcases of all both free & bonde both smale & great. By which similitude he would signifye how horrible a slaughter shoulde be brought vꝑ^{on} antichrist, & the men of no state or condition, whiche came to ayed him, shoulde fyꝛe his toꝛment whether they were pꝛinces, or whether the comune people, whether they were smale or great. For y^e ther shall none remaine of y^e whole army of antichrist, or y^e shold be ransomed wth mony, but y^e all shold be slayd & not on left. We are here also admonished in y^e he calleth Christ y^e greate God, against y^e blasphemouse canils of Arrians, like as paul also in the second chap. to tytus, speakinge of his secōd coming. For in either place y^e holy ghost vnderstādeth christ to be most greate & equall, wth the father whom he setteth forth and honoꝛeth by y^e name of y^e greate God.

Uers. 19. And I saw the beast and the kinges of the earth and there warriours gathered together to make barrell against him that

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sat on the horse and against his souldiours. &c.

Now beginnerth the most grienouse battaile, for now Antichrist, with his wicked confederate Princes, & with there whole army setteth him selfe against Christ y victorouse Captayne. we read befoze in the sixtenth Chapter that by the common counsell of the Denill the pope and his cleargie, Legates were sent forth, which like frogges boasting nothinge, but bubbles and a vaine croking, y by there babling they would stirre up Princes that they might set them selues in armour against Christ. Nowe therefore in this last battaile they fighte vnder Antichrist, whiles they studie by all meanes to establisth his tyrannie, which God will haue abolished, and with great labour they desire to ouerthrow y kingdome of Christ which is spread abroape by the Gospell. They fighte therefore with all there force against Christ and his army, that is against the preachers and professors of his truth, as we dayly see befoze oure eyes.

Uers. 10. And the beast was taken, and with him that false Prophete that wrought myracles befoze him, with which he deceyued them that receyued the beastes marke, and them that worshipped his Image, these both were cast quicke into a lake of fire, burninge with byrmstone. &c.

The two verses which remayne of this Chapter do teache, what ende there shalbe of this last battaill, and firste what remayneth for the captaynes the selues. They are taken saith he (all there armye belinge ouerthrowen) euen the beast and the false Prophete, that is the Romaue Antichrist and his false Propheticall clergie, whiche with feyned signes & myracles seduced the nations into errour, that they mighte bynge into there mindes to professe bondage to the beast, and to worship his Image. These two therefore after there infinite abominations, at length beinge taken, are cast headlonge a linc into a lake that burneth for euer with byrmstone: that is, they are condemned to the most grienouse damnation of all, verely to bee tormented with so muche more grienouse tormentes, as they haue excelled, oher men in more haynouse sinnes. This shalbe the ende of the tyrannie of Antichrist.

And

Revel. 11. And the remnant were slayne with the sworde of him that sat vpon the horse, which sworde proceeded out of his mouth and all the fowles were fylled with therescathe. &c.

Although a most sharpe sentence be uttered vpo the heades of this wicked conspiracie against Christ, yet the members there of shall not escape for as many either kinges, or magistrates, as haue made them selues ministers of the furis of Antichrist, with all the rest of the men of what state or condition so euer, which had rather ꝑ Antichrist should raigne then Christ: All they are slayne with eternall death by the sworde of Gods worde, which they would not obey that they might liue. And that they should not please them selues in there multitude all the fowles of the ayre shal fill them selues euen to satisfy with there slaine karkasses. This ende, this Iudgemente tariethe for all the vprophane contemners of the Gospell, whiche the most mercifull God tourne from vs through his sonne Christ Iesus. Amen.



¶ The twentye Chapter.



The ioyning of this Chapter With the former vision shall seeme somewhat more obscure, except we repeate the matter further of and from the beginninge. In the beginning therfore of this vision is that Drago ꝑ great Deuill brought in, as the principall enemye of the Church, vnder whome afterward do warre Antichrist and his clergie, with the Princes and people, whiche obey them, the damnation of all which was set for the nexte before in the end of the 19. Chap. now therfore in good order followeth the condēnation of Sathā himself, which shalbe in the last daye of iudgmente. But because ꝑ wickednes of ꝑ deuill against Christ ꝑ his Church, extendeth moze largely the which may be corrected.

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in the tyrannie of the pope or of the Church of Rome: he com-
poseth a shorthe historie of all his subrill practise and trecherie,
from the time that Christ suffered vnto the ende of the world.
Whiche is diligentlie to be marked, least we fall into the do-
rage of the Chiliastes, if we thinke these thousande yeares of
which S. Iohn speaketh to be begunne and counted from the
time that Antichrist was overcome.

Uers. 1. And I sawe an Angell come downe fro heauen hauing the
key of the bottomles pit and a great chayne in his hande &c.

THere remayne as yet the tormentes which are to be layde
on Sathan which is the head, and Prince of all the perse-
cutions moued against the Church. First therefore is descri-
bed his wickednesse, that we may knowe that he hath deserued
the most sharpe sentence of eternall damnation. For before the
incarnation of Christ, he seduced the whole world excepte a ve-
rie fewe of the nation of the Iewes, into Idolatrie and most
abominable lite. But at length an Angell came downe from
heauen, which representeth Christ, or at the least his minister,
which had the key to shut the bottomles pit, whiche was the
prison in which Sathan should be shut vp, and in his hande a
great chayne, with which the deuill should be bounde, so long
as he shoulde be kept in prison so we see that Sathan is not
onely shut vp in prison, but also bounde with a chayne that hee
might not hurte. For so great a lust and desire to hurte is euen
bred in him, that vnlesse he be caste into boundes, and prison
he will alwaies raise vp some toynples and troubles. But
there is no cause why the elect shoulde be asfeard of his tyran-
nie, bycause Christ as ofte as he will thrusteth him downe in-
to the bottomles pit, and holdeth him bounde both hande and
foote with a grear chayne, vntill he shall thinke good to sende
him forth to seduce the reprobate. For as he doth shut him vp
in the bottomles pit, whiles he prouideth for the saluation of
his owne, so also he suffereth him loosed from his boundes to
range, that he may worke at his pleasure in the wicked childre
of wrathe and perdition, that at length with iust punishment
they may be toynmented with him for euer.

And

Uers. 1. And he toke the Dragon that olde Serpent which is the deuill and Sathanas, & he bound him a thousand yeares. &c.

When as the Denill had walked at libertie throughe all nations almost from the beginning of the world, and had filled the whole worlde with all kinde of wickednesse and heynous finnes, at length in the comming of Christ, whiche had chosen to him selfe a Church and much people among the gentiles, his licenciousnesse is hidled, and although he strived verie much to get forth, yea verely he endeouored if he could by any meanes overcome Christ him selfe, by the Pharises and high priestes: yet he was caught although he be a great & terrible Dragon, though he be a most auncient and subtile serpent, which before had seduced all mē, howsoever he became a slanderous reprocher of Christ and his doctrine, and a most bitter enemy, he was caught I say and bound with that great chaine of sincere doctrine, that he can not range abroad at libertie as he was wonte. That S. Iohn setteth him forth with sundrie titles, he did it not onely for this, that we may knowe whome he vnderstandeth by the great Dragon, but also he marketh him with these names, that we maye learne to knowe his manners and subtil nature, and learne to eschewe and take heede of them. As we haue expounded before in 12. Chapter. And also in this place he reciteth his diuers names, that wee might vnderstand, that although he be an artificer of a thousand subtilties, and like proteus could transforme him selfe in a hundred shapes, yet he coulde not avoide this purpose of Christ, but that he shoulde be taken and cast into boundes. But the time which here is compassed in the space of a thousand yeares, in which the Denill shoulde be kepte bound in prison, doth signifie a long time, and vncerten to men. In which space of time the pure doctrine of the Gospell shoulde flourish in the worlde, and manye men out of all nations shoulde be taken into the eternall inheritance of Christ and wee see that almoste by the space of a thousande yeares after Christ some light of sincere, doctrine remayned in the worlde, at the least many did consue upon the pointes of Christian religion which were chiefe and most.

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moste necessarie to saluation: vntill at lengthe the doctrine of Antichrist being brought in, of merites, of satisfactions, of the sacrifice of the masse and other monsters, the onely foundation of faith and free Justification of faith was taken away. In that whole space of time therefore, the power of sathan was bolide, so long as by faith in the merites of Christ alone, the way was open for men to heauen. And we must note that sathan is sayd to be bound, and shut in prison, so longe as he doth not seduce the greatest multitude to eternall destruction. For he wrought in y^e reprobate, all the time of those thousande yeares in which he was bound, but bycause he could not wast the whole world together or the greatest multitude thereof he is sayd to be shut vp in the bottomlesse pit and bound with a great chaine.

Act. 3. And he cast him into the bottomlesse pitte, and he shut him vp, and sealed the doze vpon him. &c.

The Angell cast Sathan being taken and bounde into the depe bottomlesse pit, and after when the doze of the prison was shut and locked, he painted the scale of God vpoⁿ the same, that no man should be so bold as to open or vnlocke it. The similitude is taken of the costume of Princes, whiche shut those into the innermost dungeonse of the prisons, whome they will kepe in the stragghest warde, and then they seale the doze with there owne seale. In that Sathan needeth so great inclosures that his wickednesse mighte be restrayned, wee must acknowledge, the desire and studie wherewith he burneth to do hurte, and the nature of those men, which in continuall desire of hurting resemble there father the deuill. And moreover that the rage of the deuill should be restrayned with manye fetters it was acceptable to the faithfull, which desired to haue the kingdome of Christ spread furthest abroad.

That he should deceyue the people no more till the thousand yeares were fulfilled. &c. Nothing is more grieuous to Sathan, then if he can not worke his malice and furie, that he might drawe the greatest companie of men to eternall torments, or at the least if he cannot bring some hurt or discomoditie to the Church. The whole legion of devils besoughte Christ,

Christ, that he woulde not commaunde them to descende into the deepe, but at the least that he woulde suffer them to rage vpon the swine: Luke 8. **¶** Herevpon we vnderstande that sathan is then caste into the bottomelesse pit, when the power of har-tinge is taken from him. **¶** What a greate torment therefore was it to Sathan when he was constrained to remaine bounde, for so longe a time in the bottomelesse pit. But it semeth against reason, that y^e deuill was bounde for a thousand yeares, seeinge there were neuer moze greuous persecution moued against the Church, then in the ages next after Christ, but we muste note, that Sathan was not letted to rage in cruelty vpon the bodies but that he shoulde not seduce the nations as he was wonte in time past, to Idolatrye, and all kinde of wickednes whiche is to be referred to the greate multitud of the elect, which were called in the time of those thousand yeares vnder the Gospell, and haue stood constant in the faith of Christ in all aduersities.

For after that he must be losed for a litle season. &c. **¶** When as now the pestilence of the Babumet, and the Pope waxed stronge and increased. He must be losed for a litle time, that he may seduce the nations into Idolatrye, as he seduced the whole worlde before the birth of Christ. For after a thousand yeares whiles the turkes in the East, and the papistes in the west possessed all with there dotages, we may rightely coniecture that Sathan was losed oute of prison. But this euill shall not indure longe, for the end of the world is at hand, and the truth of the gospel beinge restored againe to the worlde, hath disclosed the falshood of both the enemies.

¶ **¶** And I saw seats, and them that sat on the, and iudgement was geuen vnto the, and I saw the soules of them y^e were beheaded for the writings of Iesus, and for y^e word of God & which did not worship the beast, neither his image neither had taken his marke vpon their foreheads or on their handes, and they liued & reigned with Christ a thousand yeares. &c.

¶ It is described in this Verse howe blessed the estate of the faithfull was for the thousand yeares space, in whiche Sathan is shutte vp in prison, whereby that all difficulties

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beinge ouercome, yea euen the feare of death also they did happily depart vnto heaue. For when as all wicked and carnall affections are mortified, they are regenerate into a new life, so that they would not refuse to be smitten with the arc, rather then they would deny the testimony of Iesus or the worde of God, or would submit them selues by any meanes to the tyranny of Antichrist. Therefore beinge deliuered from the calamities of this miserable life by the first death which is of the body, and beinge taken vp into heauenly ioyes, they liue still and reigne with Christ throughe the whole thousande yeares, that is, so long as Sathan shall remaine in bondes, not that after the thousande yeares they shall dye or shall cease to raigne with Christ, but that he mighte expresse to how greate a benefite it was to the godly, that the deuill was kept in prison for so long a space of time, when as in the meane while a greate multitude of the elect, not seduced by his illusions, doe passe this mortall life in hope, and beinge vnclothed of there bodies dooe passe the reste of the time in blessed happines. In that he salwe thrones set for them beinge receiued to iudgemente, he doeth sufficientely declare, that the happines whiche the blessed spirit of the deade inioye shall endure euen to the ende of the worlde that then euen as members ioyned to there head, they may exercise the iudgement of the worlde with Christ as Paule witnesseth, that we shall iudge the worlde and the Angels firste *Corinthians. 6.*

1. Cor. 6. But the other of the deade men did not liue against vntill the thousand yeares were finished, this is the first resurrection. &c.

Like as he set forth in the verse goinge next before the state and condicion of the godlye for the thousande yeares space. So in this verse he describeth the state of the wicked namelye y they were dead in whom Christ liued not, neither should they be raised vp fro the death of y body into blessed life, but shold remaine dead those whole thousand yeares, as well in body as in soule: not y ther soule shal perishe w ethre body, but that hauing died the first death which is of the body, they should also be punished with the seconde death whiche is eternall damnation of the

of the soule. For this is the first resurrection, whereby the soules beinge raised vp from sinne, whiche bringethe forth the death, we rise into a newe life, whiche beinge begunne in this world, after þ dissoluing of this bodie receyueth great increase, and at length in the seconde resurrectiõ after the restoring of the bodie shalbe fully perfected.

Verf. 6. Blessed and holy is he that hath parte in the first resurrection: for on suche the second death shall haue no power: but they shalbe the priestes of God, and of Christ, and shall raigne with him a thousande yeere. &c.

HE magnifieth the happinesse and holinesse of those whose parte is in the first resurrection, which is the regeneration of the soule frõ sinne, bycause on those the second death whiche is eternall torment of bodie and soule, hath no power and as Christ sayd before, he that shall overcome shall not be hurte of the seconde death, but they shalbe priestes to god and Christ, which being sanctified shall neuer cease to offer vp the sacrifice of thankes geuing, and they shall raigne with Christ a thousande yeares, whiles the wicked shall not rise from that death of the soule vntill they shalbe iudged to eternall torments. we are taughte here that they, which by the spirite of Christ are regenerate into a newe life, are deliuered from the feare of eternall damnation, neither can they ener fall from the grace of god into destruction, but he whiche hathe begunne the worke of regeneration, the same shall make perfecte the same to eternall felicitie.

Verf. 7. And when the thousande yeares are expired Sathan shall be loosed out of his prison. &c.

When the time appointed of god shall come, in which the worlde for vnthanchefullnesse and contempte of the gospel, deserued to fall into the olde errors, the power of seducing whiche before was taken awaye from Sathan, is permitted againe vnto him that he maye drawe almoste the whole worlde with his wonted decepptes and illusions into false and adulterate religiõ. Truly this is a horrible example of gods seuerite and sharpenesse, and this also Saincte Ioules

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forgetolde should be, that **G D D** woulde sende the strengthe and efficacie of error vpon those which despised the lighte of the Gospell. There is no cause therefore why we should meruaile if two most absurde and grosse errors, the one of Mahumete the other of the Pope toke so greate increase in the worlde, seeing when the deuill is losed all kinde of euill must needes flowe and abounde.

Mat. 8. And shall go oute to deceyue the people which are in the foure quarters of the earth. &c.

Saincte Ihon sayeth that Sathan is sente forth by the certeyne and determinate counsell of God, not that hee mighte seduce and deceyue some one nation, but all nations which are in the 4. quarters of the earth, that he mighte compell them to fall away fro the faith of Christ which they professed in mouth onelye, to Turkishe and Popishe superstitions, so that verie fewe should remayne throughte the whole worlde, whiche should embrace the true Gospell of Christ and retayne the puritie of doctrine.

Gog and **Magog**, to gather them together to battaylle, whose number is as the sande of the Sea. &c. There is no doubt, but that by these hee meaneth, the prinie, and open enemies of Christian religion, that is all his aduersaries of what sorte so euer. for **Gog**, signifieth couered, **Magog** vncouered. For the Pope couerethe his wickednesse vnder pretence of the name of Christ, when as he is his swoyne enemy, but Mahumete blasphemethe the name of Christ openlye, althoughe vnder these names, all other Heresyes, whiche are in the worlde are comprehended. And there remaineth a notable cleare Prophecie concerning these enemies of the Church and there subuersion. **Ezekiel. 38. 39.** For there the Lord commaundeth the prophete that he should prophete against **Gog**, & the land of **Magog**, the prince & head of mischiefe, & tuball. And we learne by the psalm 120. y mischiefe signifieth Arabia and tuball is sayde to haue dwelt in Italye. **Magog** gaue the Originall to the Scythians, these were all the posteritye of

of Iapheth. And we see that the chiefe enemies of the Church
toke there begiange of thes regions. Mahumet of Arabia, the
Pope of Italy, and Othomannus the turke of Scythia. The de-
uill must roth all these beinge seduced into errours, into battell
to be foughte against Christ and his Church. And he prepa-
reth to him selfe an army of those, whose number is infinite, e-
uen as the sand of the sea. So great is the multitude of the wic-
ked, whiche warre vnder Sathan. Now let the papistes go and
boast of there multitude, yea we will reckon the Turkes, and
all Mahumetistes with them, by whose accesse they shall gette
nothings else but that all of them beinge compact together in-
to one compagne, they may be the army of the deuill.

*Vers. 9. And they went vp into the plaine of the earth & com-
passed the tentes of the saintes aboute, and the beloued citie
but fier came downe from God out of heauen
and deuoured them. &c.*

HE expreſſeth in this verſe how great the multitude of them
was, in that there army, couered the whole vpper face of the
earth, and they compaſſed the tentes of the ſaintes aboute, that is
the Church, and they beſeiged the beloued citie the heauenly e
Jeruſalem with a moſt ſtraight ſege. Here we are taughte into
how narrow a rounne the Church ſhoulde be brought, when as
the army of the deuill, couered almoſt the whole earth, and com-
paſſed in on euery ſide the tentes of the ſaintes whiche poſſeſſe
onely a ſmale ſpace of grounde, with the furniture of Sathan.
For we ſee that from the Eaſt the turke hangeth ouer Chri-
ſtendome, in the weſt the tyrannye of the Romaine Antichriſt
dothe raunge, ſo that on eyther ſide they haue beſeiged the belo-
ued citie. But let vs bee of good comforte that are beſeiged, ſo
God whiche loueth oure citie will not ſuffer it to be deliuered
vp into the power of the enimies. Although gog and magog as-
ſault the campe of the ſaintes with all there engines: yet the
Lorde of hoſtes ſtandeth on oure ſide, and compaſſeth vs on e-
uery ſide with ſo deepe a trench that they canne neuer ſpoile
o, draw vs out of oure campe. But at length a horrible, ſodaine

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and vnloked for destruction, as it were fier from heauen vpon Sodoma and Gomorra, shall apprehende them and consume them to ashes: This shall be the ende of Gog and Magog, whiche that the Royde woulde vouchsafe to brynge speedely, we ought vehemently to desire of him with ardent prayers.

Uers. 10. And the deuill that receiued them was cast into a lake of fier and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet shall be tormented daye and night for euermore, &c.

NOW at length cometh the laste damnation of the deuill. For after that he hath persecuted the Church by all waies and meanes he could, as it is declared in the 12 chapter, raising by againste her the Romaine Antichrist and his clergie, settinge a whozishe Church againste her, and at length also stirring the hatred of the Mahometistes againste her, last of all he is apprehended and together with the beast and the false prophete shall be condemned to eternall tormentes. This shall be his rewarde for so greate laboures, whiche althoughe Satan knowe well enoughe, yet he releaseth no parte of his madnes, wherewith he rageth againste the godly, but how much nerer hee is to extreme tormentes, so muche moze he wareth mad againste the Church. But Christ when the faithfull are taken vnto him, shall condemne him, as the head and aucthor of all wickednes whiche floweth in the woꝛlde, together with his Aungels, to be tormented with the euerlastinge tormentes of hell. When at the laste, the Church, when all enemies are overcome, euen the deuill, death and sinne, shall quietly triumphe for euer vnder Christe her Kinge. In the meane time whyles she as a pilgrime in earth, beinge sustented with the hope and expectation of this happines, with a quiet minde she suffereth all aduersities, and despisinge the woꝛlde she dayly aspirerh vnto heauen.

Uers. 11. And I saw a greate white throne, and one that sat on it, from whose face fled awaie both the earth and the heauens and there place was no moze found. &c.

NOW he concludeth this vision with a description of the last

last iudgement for though he were conspyned, often before to touche the same, yet he reserved and kept the full forme of it into this last place. He seeke therefore a thone of wonderfull greatnesse, by the whitenesse of the same testifyinge the synccritie of the Iudge, and the Iudgemente. For there shalbe no corruptinge of Iudgemente in that tribunall seate, no accepting of persons, bribes shall there nothing pynasse, love or hatred shall do nothing, but he shall iudgeth all thinges by Iustice. Werelye the Iudge that is our Lorde Iesus Christ is of so great Maicstie, that the heave and earthe flie from his presence for by his comminge he shall chaunge the whole face or shape of the worlde. To this we maye referre the darkeninge of the Sunne and Moone, the shakinge of the powers of heauen, the horrible royinge of the Sea, and the trembling of all creatures. So great is the horronr of this Iudgement, that men beinge discoraged they shalbe tormented with feare of him before he shall come. what shalbe the terrour therefore, when the Iudge shall sit vpon the tribunall seate. What he denieth that the place of heauen and earth shalbe founde, he doeth not understande that the creature shalbe utterly abolished, but that this olde forme shalbe put of, that it maye haue a newe, and a farre more perfecte put vpon it, as wee reade Psalm 102. and 2. Pet. 3.

Act. 12. And I saw the dead both the small and great stande before god, and the booke were opened. & another booke was open which is the booke of liues the dead were iudged of those thinges which were written in the booke according to there doers. &c.

First of all is expresse the sentence of the Iudgement, that none either great or small can flye or eschew it, for we must all appeare before the tribunall seate of Christ. Afterwarde the booke shalbe opened, which are the consciences of every one. They shall hypocrisie nothing viualle, or fained holines, when as the conscience beinge opened, every one shall receiue sentence by it, such as by his owne Iudgemente hee hath deserved. For that whiche the Word sayeth is alwayes most true: this is the first reuengement, that no guyle person is absolved, although he be his owne Iudge, howe secret

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vnlawfull fauour may deceyne the Iudgemente of the iudicior.
But in the meane time what saluation shall there be for the
electe? For they also are gyltie to them selues of many sinnes
and sometime also of great and heynouse offences. But Iohn
answereth this doubte; shewinge that an other booke was
brought forth and opened, whiche is called the booke of life,
whereby it was manifest to whome God had before ordeyned to
lyfe, by his vnbchangeable decree. Here vppon dependeth the
saluation of the electe, whiche they obteyne by faith in the
worthinesse and merites of Christ in whome there election is
founded, and being formed into new creatures by the grace of
the holy ghost, they make the same manifest in the worlde by
good workes, to the glorie of his name. Therefore of the wor-
kes which euerie one hath done in the fleshe, Iudgement shall
be geuen vpon him, his stowe conscience being witnesse. But
vnfitly shal any man moue the questiō in this place, what kinde
of Iudgemente infantes shall haue, whiche haue done neither
good nor euill. For these thinges pertaine to the instructing of
those which are grown to ryper age, & are to be vnderstoode
of there Iudgement, for in those which haue done noe workes,
onely election or reprobation shall haue place.

Mat. 13. And the sea gaue vp her dead, and death and hell gaue vp
there dead, which were in them, &c.

Because by sundrie kindes of death men are take out of this
life, as some being drowned in the sea, some consumed with
fire, some cut in peeces, it seemeth vncrediblle to fleshe, that all
shall rise againe after the same manner. Therefore Iohn reher-
seth as it was shewed to him in vision, that the sea, death and
hell gaue vp those to Iudgement, whiche were found dead in
them. Wherby he signifieth that no man of what deache soe-
uer he hath died, shall perish, but all and euerie one, by the voi-
ce of Christ our sauour after the last trumpe and the voice of
the Archangell, shalbe called vp to Iudgement with their bo-
dies. It is certain therefore that neither the bodies of the god-
ly are corrupted into nothinge, neither that the karkasses of
the wicked shall escape tormentes.

And

And they were Iudged euerie man accordinge to his workes. &c. Bycause nothing is moze easye to hypocrites, then to sayne holynesse in woordes, hee repeateth againe that euerie man shalbe Iudged by his workes, his owne conscience, which is like to a thousande witnesss, allowinge the sentence as Iuste.

Uers. 14. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire, this is the seconde death. &c.

In the woordes of death and hell, is the figure Metonomia signifying those whiche were guyltie of the Iudgemente of death and hell. For the reprobate, whiche by the testimonie of there owne conscience, are damned for there sinnes, without all delay are cast into that fierie lake, that is into eternall tormentes. And he affirmeth this to be the second death, when as the soule hauing put on the bodie, shalbe tormented in eternal tormentes of hell with the deuill and his Angells. Let vs do our indeauour therefore, that we maye bee made partakers of the first resurrection, least we be thyowne headlong into the seconde death.

Uers. 15. And whosoever was not founde written in the booke of of life was cast into the lake of fire. &c.

Nowe he expoundeth moze playnely what he vnderstandeth, by death and hell, which he sayed shoud be cast into the lake, that is euen all the reprobate, which are not predestinate in Christ to eternall life. All these by the moste Iuste Iudgement of God, althoughe secrete to vs, are caste into the lake which burneth with fire and bymstone. For the electe onely are free from this damnation. we se here that sanctification followeth election, the reprobate remayne in there corruption. For all are Iudged according to there workes, & yet the electe onely are saued, and all the reprobate are condemned to eternall torment. As many therefore as haue the spirite of election geue vs, let vs studie to make the same firme and sure to our selues by good workes, which god hath prepared that we shoud walke in them, to the praise & glozie of his name, to whom be giuen all honour and power for euer.

S. v.

¶ The

¶ The twentye & one Chap.



Now followeth the last vision of this reuelation which is conteyned in the two chapters whiche remaine, in whiche is described the restoring of all things to the happie estate & condition of the Church after y^e resurrectio. *Verf. 1.* And I saw a new heauen and a new earth, &c.

He prophecieth that the happie renewinge of the whole world shalbe, when Christ the redeemer of the electe shall once appeare. And he alludeth to those thinges whiche Elaye prophecieth Chap 65. 66. Concerninge the restauration of the new heauen and the new earthe. For as by the fall of man the whole world fell in to ruine and destruction, so also with the restoring of mankinde, the other creature shalbe repayed. wherfoze the do we so much esteeme this world which wareth old, & almost rottē for age, & not rather w dayly praicrs earnestly grone for y^e new heauē & new earth, in which righteounes doth dwell. For the first heauē and the first earth were passed away. &c. All thinges are so subiecte to vanitie & corruption, in this heauen & this earth, in which we nowe liue, that they must of necessitie be abolished, y^e there may be place for the new heauē, & the new earth. Not y^e the creature shalbe brought to nothing, but bycause y^e glorious restoring into the liberty of the sonnes of God, for which the creature mourneth with vs. *Rom. 8.* shalbe as it were a new creation of heauen & earth.

And there was no more sea, &c. Nothing y^e is terrible, or deformed such as the sea seemeth to vs, shalbe scene in that blessed renouarib of the world. Nothing which shall sencer the electe dwelling as it were in one citie, nothing shalbe to them any stoppe of passage, or any dāger in there way. But it is impertinent to inquire here, what shalbe done with the elemente of water, whē it is not y^e purpose of the holy ghost to describe the substance or matter whereon the world renewed shall consist but the qualities.

Verf. 2. And I Ihon sawe the holy Citie newe Ierusalem come downe from God oute of heauen, &c.

Not onely the repararib of the whole world shalbe happie, but principally y^e state & conditiō of the Church shalbe the

the most blessed of all, as for whose cause the rest of the world shalbe made partaker of the blessednes. And hir state is compared to the most holy citie new Ierusalē, garnished w a newe & wonderfull buylding, whose buylder is God him selfe, whose foundations are layd frō heauē, which doth so much excede y glozy & beautie of that old Ierusalē, as it hath moze noble beginnings. For y Ierusalē was set in an vneue place, of y earth & not well watred with springes, first buylded of certen prophane Jebusites, so often vanquished & at length rased vp frō the foundations & made euen with the ground. But this most holy citie hath god for her buylder, & she came downe frō heauē, brynging all y betwix of heauē w hir. Let vs reioice that we are citizens of y citie, which I. Iohn so cōstantly affirmeth, that he saw, that we may vnderstande that it is now buylte already least after the maner of the common soxe, which thincketh the ende of all thinges to come to be doubtfull and vncerten, because we see it not, we should lesse beleue that it is prepared.

Prepared as a bride trimed for hir husband. He expōdeth in what the blessednesse of y sainctes doth chiefly cōsist, namely y they may be perfectly ioynd to god, that the hyde may come into the imbracings of y hydegrom, y the mēbers may be ioynd to the head, y his seruants may be receiued into the ioy of there Lord. But the Church hath not this decking of a hyde wherwith she cōmeth so beautifull into the presence of god, of her self, but she borroweth all her righteousnes, wisdom & holines of Christ. w which ornaments being garnished, she excelleth all quenes in glorie & beautie. And vntill y most renowned day of y marriage shall come a great part of hir doth wander as a stranger here in earth, w hich notwithstanding doth possesse these dowries in the meane time by faith, but at length she shal perfectly obteyne the for ever.

Act. 3. And I herd a great voice out of heauē, saying. &c.

As ofte as it is said in y scriptures y a voice is heard about an auctor, it is mēt as we haue noted oft before, y it proceed immediately frō the maiestie of god it self, & is to be receyued of vs w great attention. And in this place, the great voice, that is, a loude sounding voice, sente from heauen ought to stricke

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all oure senses, and frame them to a diligent marking.

Beholde the tabernacle of God is with men. &c. Although the old tabernacle was but a shadow, yet it was sayd to be the greatest glorie of Israell, and it was reputed of all the godlye in keede of an incomparable treasure, which not withstanding was scarcely his foote stole as Ieremie calleth it lament 2. But Christ hath genen much moze excellent signes of his presence in the Church, euen as he promised that he would be with vs euen to the end of the world, but then shalbe in deede the fruite of ioyning together when God, will pitche his eternall tabernacle with men.

And he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people. &c. Although the tabernacle and arcke of the couenaunte were among the Israelites yet god dwelled not alwayes with them, for asmuche as hee was prouoked to anger with their heynonse sinnes, as the Psalmist doth singe, he often forsooke the habitatiō which he had chosen among men. But when these times shall come there shalbe no sinnes, nor any other thinge that shall seporate vs from the eternall felowship and cohabitation of God, for we shalbe his peculier people, whome hee will alwayes acknowledge for his, & we likewise, shall cleaue wholly vnto him.

And God him selfe shalbe with them, and bee there God. &c. There is a great Emphasis almost of euerie worde, God him selfe saith he shalbe with men, and shalbe there most louing God. The thinges therefore whiche it is meete, for God to bestow vpon those whome he holdeth most deare the same oughte the faythfull to looke for at his handes. Howe great & how magnificall the thinges are whiche God will graunte to those men, whome he shall vouchsafe his presence, and whose god he shall not be ashamed to be counted, can not be comprehended in the thought of man, nor can not be expressed wiche the tongue or speache of any man.

Act. 4. And God shall wipe awaye all teares from the eyes. &c.

The feare of euils approaching whiche doth trouble men that are subiecte to death, euen in there greatest gladnesse, shalbe further

furthest from the most happie condition of the blessed ones. For no sorowe, no grieue shall come vpon there happines, by which they shold lesse haue the fruites of sorow & yett more for euer. For god shall wipe away all teares from there eyes. For he shall fill them being deliuered out of the greatest miseries & calamities, with an inspeakable ioy of comfort & consolation. And there shall be no more death. what soeuer evil sin brought in with it, all that same, when sinne is abolished shall be taken awaye. Therefore when as death is the rewarde of sinne, it shall haue no place in those which by Christ haue ouercome sinne. For Christ triumphed ouer death nor for him selfe but for his chosen, they therefore whiche shall be partakers of the resurrection from death by Christ, death shall no more rage ouer them. Therefore they shall inioye immortall glorie, & felicitie, whosoener they be which are called to the partakinge of his kingdome.

Neither sorowe. &c. The benefite of drawinge oute the life into eternitie should not be so great, if it should be often affected with mourning and the bitterness of sorowe, as this oure fragile life is. Therefore the heauenlye voice dothe expresse by name, that all sorow and mourning are utterly banished from that life, least there should be anye thing at all, whiche might spo to darken the glorie of eternall felicitie.

Neither crying. &c. The bitterness of sorowe doth often times wryng out of vs, beside teares, complaining voices also, and lamentable wepinges. Like as it is geue of nature, to all liuing creatures at the least, which utter any voice, & whe they are grievously hurt, or do feele paine: by & by they send forth miserable howlings, by which w doubt they lamentably craue & helpe of god after their maner, for their sorowes. But the whe all cause which may bring sorow & grieue shall be altogether taken away, there shall no where be heard weping, cries, and lamentable, howlinges, but of all creatures, that is of as many as shall be receiued into the glorious libertie of the soones of God, there shall be one onely voice of ioyfulness praising god for his infinite benefites, & reioysing one with an other for the selues.

Neither shall there be any more payne. we attaine nothing.

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in this life that is precious, without labour and griefe and this is a parte of the punishment, in the sweate of thy browes thou shalt eate thy bread: but in that life there shall be in a readinesse, whatsoeuer thinges they be that may adorne our felicitie. Yea verelye the infinite liberalitie of God shall minister perpetually all thinges in flowing abundaunce to vs resting in quiett. But it seemeth absurde, seeing God be soze master, would haue him exercised in dressing the garden that hee should not waie flourishfull by idlenesse, that now when men are restored into a more higher degree of happinesse, all labour and care of worke is taken from them. But it is easy to answer, that all labour whiche shall bring irksomnesse, wearinesse or griefe, shall be utterly abolished. But yet the blessed shall not liue in idlenesse or slepe. But to demaunde what shall remaine for them which they maye doe when they haue put on these bodies, is superfluous, seeinge it is not defined in the Scriptures.

For the first thinges are passed. &c. The reason why none of those euils which he hath reckened vpon shall remaine, is, because the first thinges, that is all those olde thinges are abolished, & in the world renewed none of these shall be founde. For like as with sinne and for sinne, all those plagues entred into the worlde, to reuenge the vngodlinesse of men, so when the corruptible figure of this worlde shall passe awaye, they also shall be destroyed, and shall not find any place in the blessednesse to come.

*1. Cor. 1. And he that sate vpon the throne sayde, beholde
I make all thinges newe, &c.*

That there might be a full certentie of all these thinges to the faithful God him selfe is brought in sittinge vpon the throne of his maiestie, publishing a decree, concerning the renewinge of the world. Beholde sayeth he I make all thinges newe. That there should be no feare of those olde euils, which now coner the whole earth, hee promisethe not onelye that those olde thinges to are passed away, but that he will create all thinges newe.

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And he sayde vnto me write, for these woordes are faithfull and true. &c. Bycause this consolation which the remembrance of the happynesse to come doth bring forth, is especially necessarie to the Church being miserably afflicted with shapc calamities, God doth not onely establishe this decree concerning the restoring of the world, but commaundeth the same also to be committed to writing, that by readinge and hearinge the same the afflicted consciences of the Godly mighte drawe out comfozte, and for the greatnesse of the rewardes mighte strongly beare all labours, for there is nothinge more certain then this decree concerninge the eternall blessednesse and triumphe of the godly, of which all those shalbe partakers after the resurrection, which now do fight valiantly vnder the banner of Christ.

Uers. 6. And he sayde vnto me it is done, I am Alpha and Omega the beginning and the ende. &c.

It doth euen in this place sufficiently appeare, how sure and perfecte Christ would haue this consolation be to his, that by so many constante affirmations, he establissheth this fixed and vnmoueable decree: It is done sayeth hee, as if he should say, there is nowe no place left for doubting, for this felicitie is as surer, which ye now possesse by hope, as if ye held it in youre handes. For the vnhangeable and vntreucable sentence of God, whiche can neuer bee broken, is passed vpon it. It is also to bee referred to this that hee sayeth, that hee is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, that is, the eternall God, whose stable and thonghe all ages immouneable will hath decreed this, which can neither deceyue nor be deceyued, whose worde, though heauen and earth should passe, doth neuer faile, but indureth for euer. Here therefore the faithfull, maye attayne most plenteouse matter of consolation as oft as the deuill laboureth by his engins to ouerthrowe there saiety, that lookinge to the rewarde layed vp for them in heauen, they may valiantly contemne all the vayne pompes, of the world. And maye rather beare all labours, crosses, reproches, with a quiet minde, for which so vndoubted glorie, blessednesse and euer.

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euertlasting felicitie is layed vp in heauen.

I will geue to him that is a thirst of the well of the water of life freely. &c. Bycause it is necessarie f^r minds of the godlye should after a wonderfull manner be affected with the desire of this rewarde, neither can they read or heare these thinges, but that by & by they thirst after most earnestly, the most pleasant springes of eternall life. Beholde Christ him selfe meeteth them in the way that seeke him, whiche liberallye proffereth the drinke to euerie one that thirsteth out of the most cleare founteyne of eternall life. What wanteth therefore to the felicitie of the saintes? Of which they shall freely be made obteyners if they be touched with a desire of the same, here is no reason, or respecte of merites, for eternall life is the gifte of God, not a rewarde due for woorkes, but proceeding of the infinite liberalitye of him, which geueth it. In the meane time here is the slouthfullnesse and sluggishnesse of those condemned, whiche being wrapped in the filthinesse of this world, and moze then dronken with worldly pleasures, doe neuer thirst after eternall life, but carelesly set at naught whatsoeuer they heare out of the scriptures of paradise, of the new Ierusalem, of the founteyn of the water of life, and suche like rewardes. These because they do not thirst for the water of life, shall drinke of the pure vnmixed wine of Gods wrath, and as the bound slaues of the world and the Deuill, they shall be subiecte to eternall tormentes.

Act. 7. He that ouercommeth shall inherite all thinges, and I will be his God and he shall be my so. n. c. c.

That wee mighte not thinke that these ample rewardes of happinesse are set forth to the idle and sluggish, he sheweth that we must fighte and that manfully, so that we may become conquerers, and then the inheritance of all thinges, shall be ours by the testamēt of Christ, which he hath sealed with his blood. And if we be esteemed to be the soons of Abraham by faith, we shall be appointed heyres of the newe world with him, but that whiche excelleth all thinges, we shall take possession of the inheritance of the sonnes of God. For we ought not to looke for a

for a lesse ample and riche inheritance, then it pleaseth God to assigne to those, whom he hath adopted in his onely begotten son; we shall be the heyres of God and felowe heyres of Christ.

Revel. 8. But the fearfull and vnbeleuinge, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers and idolaters, and all liars, shall haue their parte in the lake which burneth with fier and brimstone, which is the seconde death. &c.

That the wicked should not alwaies securely please themselves in their filthines and contene all friendly admonitions he denounceth horrible & eternall paynes vnto them who shall not onely haue this intollerable punishment to be shuted out from this happines, but shall moreover be cast into the most greuous torments of hell. But he reckeneth by onely certeyne kindes of wicked men, yet he comprehendeth vnder these all kindes of iniquitie, he calleth those fearefull which feare men more than god, which are ashamed of the name of Christ though by feare of those evils which men can lay vpon them, which if they be by greuouslest they bringe but the death of the body onely, in the meane time, they are not afraide to betray his cause, which can throwe both body and soule into hell fier. He calleth those vnbeleuinge, which will not embrace the doctrine of the gospell, neither will they susteine to losethinges present for thinges to come, they counte it for a fable whatsoeuer is spoken of eternall life or of Christ the aucthor therof. Those may be called cursed or abominable, which hauing shaken of all the yoke of the feare of god, do rine headelonge into all wickednes, as though they did all thinges in despite of God. They also which defile themselves with murders. Adultrics, inchauntementes, and other wickednes, & do not in due time repent of there sinnes, are thrust downe into the same dungeon of tormentes. And idolaters also which worshippe the corruptible creature in steede of the vncorruptible creator, shall suffer the due punishmentes for their heynous sinnes, vnlesse they speedely repent. Lastly all kinde of liers but chiefly hypocrites, which to the faigned visage of holines thinke they can deceiue both god and men, shall haue their portio

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in the lake which burneth with fier and brimstone which is the seconde death, whiche eternall tormentes of body and soule doe accompanye.

Uers. 9. And there came vnto me one of the seuen Aungels. &c.

Hether to he hath generally described the conditiō of the blessed after the resurrection now he sheweth perticulerlye by what visions he was taught these thinges.

Which had the seuen vials full of the seuen last plagues, and he talked with me sayinge, &c. It is not absurd that the same Aungell is both a minister of Gods wrath vpon the reprobate & also appointed a messenger of consolation to the godly. One of these seuen Aungels also shewed the damnation of the greatesse whorse Babilō in the 17. chap. one also of the number both bying the description of the chaste spouse of Christ new Ierusalem, but whether it be the same that the former was it nothinge perteyneth to vs to knowe

Come I will shew thee the bride the lambes wife. God in tyme past betrothed the Church to his sonne Christ and now he being garnished with all her ornamente she prepareth her selfe to the celebration of the marriage, that Christ may leade her beinge his wife into his fathers house, that is into the heauenlye glory that she may enioy all the goods of her husbande which as yet beinge but a spouse she possesseth onely by faith,

Uers. 10. And he caried me away in the spirite to a great and an highe mounteyne. &c.

They must be caried in minde farre from the centre and lowest face of the earthe into an exceedinge highe mounteyne, whiche shalbe beholders of this moste sweete vision, together there with the John sheweth that he was taken vp into an highe place and set a losse, that from thence as it were from a beholding place, he might in contemplation see the whole figure of newe Ierusalem her situation and placinge.

And he shewed me the greatesse city holy Ierusalem. &c. Although Babilon were the greatest of all cities in earth that is
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the Church of Antichrist, and was proude in her owne greatness: but Ierusalem was small and despised, as being a stranger in this worlde, yet after the renewing of the worlde, when all her members are gathered together in one, shee is an ample and a magnificall citie to beholde. This is the firste praise of the Citie taken of the greatnesse, that with her largenesse shee sufficeth to conteyne all her Citizens, with a commodious habitation for euery one. Secondely he calleth it holie, not onely in respect of the prophane whore, and vnpure City Babylon, but also in respect of her selfe whiles she was a Pilgrim in earthe. For then she shalbe altogether beautifull without anye spot or vncleanes from which perfection she is nowe farre and much distant. Shee is called Ierusalem, for the noble promises sake, whiche remayne as concerninge her perpetuall indurynge, the accomplishment of which perteyneth to these times.

Descending out of heauen from God. &c. God him selfe the maker of all thinges is the buylder of this citie, whiche he hath framed, & made not of some elementall, or matter whiche is vnder the moone, but hath adorned her with heauenlye and eternall glory. This seat is prepared a rest of all labourers to the faithfull, and after long and hard pilgrimages, a firme and stable byding place is appointed.

Uers. 11.

Having the glorie of God. &c.

By the shining and ornature it selfe this Citie doeth testifye her buylder for the wonderfull glorie of God shiner in it. So in one worde he vttered her glorie, which by it selfe to oure tongues is vspeakeable. But bycause oure vnderstanding can not conteyne heauenlye thinges any otherwise then by the similitude of those thinges, whiche are set before our senses: he compareth her glorie to those thinges, whiche are most precious and beautifull among men, as to golde, precious stones and pearles.

And her shining waslike to a stone most precious, euen a Iasper cleare as Cristall. &c. Firste wee must note, that nothinge can be founde in this worlde of suche beaunie and shi-

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ning, that deserneth but euen to shadow the glorie of this citie. Wherefore he doeth not simplie compare her shininge to a Iasper stone or a Cristall, but he feyneth a certyne stone con- teyning the greatenesse and the most beautifull varietie, of the Iasper and most cleare throughe shyninge of the Cristall, and that precionsse stone also which should be of great price, when among men the Iasper, and Cristall are of small valewe. The first sighte therefore of this citie, if we beholde it is all at once, is most acceptable with wonderfull shyninge. In whiche that greenesse of the Emeraulde, distinguished wiche the mooste beautifull varietie of colours, wherewiche, the Iasper excell- lethe the Emerauld, doeth promise, a Citie alwaies flourish- inge and flowinge in the happie abundaunce of all thinges. But the cleare and throughe brighte shyninge of the Cristall, taketh awaie all corners, of obscuritie and darchenesse, fi- nallye all thinges, euen at the firste syghte appeare beauti- full and precionsse.

Excl. 12.

And had a great wall on hyghe. &c.

VAlles are not onely fortresses, but also ornaments to the famousst Cities. well therefore is this Citie fur- nished, and beautifull also adorne beinge inuironed with a great and excedinge hyghe wall, which can both defend the Citizens and easely kepe of the enemies.

And had twelue gates, and at the gates twelue Aun- gels, and the names written, whiche are the names of the twelue Tribes of the children of Israell. &c. This is praised in the Sytuacion of Cities, if they bee of harde en- traunce to the enemies, and easye passage in for the Citi- zens. Therefore as the wall restrayneth the enemies from en- tringe in, so the twelue gates doe receyue the Citizens and friends comminge on euery side. And that all feare shoulde bee absente, leaste anye iniurie mighte burst open the gates, there are placed so manye Aungels, euerye one the keeper of a seuerall gate, whiche as they knowe, all the Citi- zens, so they can espye and take all traicterous aduersaries, &
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will let them from entring. Upon every gate also are grauen the names of the twelue tribes, as it were the ensignes, where- by is signified that all the number of the elect beinge grafted in- to the body of Israell hath the fredome of this citye, and oughte not to be shut out from the free passage into the same

Uers. 13. On the east part there were thre gates, and on the north side thre gates, on the south side thre gates, and on the west side thre gates.

Like as Christ shall sende forth his Angells which shall ga- ther the elect from all the quarters of the worlde. Math. 24. So the gates of this heauenly city are open to receiue her inha- bitants comminge from all partes. Wherefoze the banishments whiche are furthest of are not to be feared, whiche the citisins of the heauenly Jerusalem are often compelled to suffer in this earth. From all quarters of the worlde, the waie is open to those whiche retourne to there countrey, from whiche they nowe wander as strangers. Neither skilleth not in what corner of the worlde anye of the gotlye doe dwell, soz he maye prepare his iourney from euery region of the worlde to this citye and be admitted into it.

Uers. 14. And the wall of the city had twelue foundations and in them the names of the lambes twelue Apostels, &c.

The wal which compasseth the whole circuite of the city, and fortifieth the city on euery side from the aduersaries, that is that sacred bonde of vnitye, wherewith the whole Church is bounde together, and is defended from the pernicious danger, of errors and ignozaunce: it is builded vppon, the foundation of the prophets and Apostels Jesus Christ beinge the head cor- ner stone. For vnder the names of the Apostels, are compres- hended also the names of Prophets in as muche as the doctrine of the prophets and of the apostels is the selfe same, but the apo- stolicall doctrine is muche moze euident and cleare. Where- foze if we embrace the vnity of the Church, it must be builded on these foundations, if we seeke a defence o; fortresse againste heresies, let this be a brasen wall neuer to departe so muche as an herc bredeth from the foundations of the Apostels.

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Uers. 15. And he that talked with me had a golden reede to measure the city with all, and the gates thereof and the wall thereof. &c.

WE saw other where that is to say in the eleuenth Chapter, to what vse the Lorde is sayed to measure any cities, those verely whiche he will builde vp and not destroy. The Aungell therfore withe a goulden reede measured this Citie, that he mighte signifie that the Lorde will builde vp the same for euer and we muste note, that in the eleuenth Chapter Saint Iohn is commaunded to measure the temple, and those that worship in it, because then the Lorde vsed the labour of men to builde vp his Church, but this heavenly city is builded onely of heavenly woikemanship. The instrument which the Aungell vseth is a goulden reede whereby the excellency of the woike and of the deuine woikemanshippe is shadowed. And he repeateth all the seuerall partes, as the citie, the gates, the wall, that nothinge to her eternall continuance mighte sente to be neglected or omitted.

Uers. 16. And the city lay foure square, and the length is as large as the breaddeth of it, and he measured the city with the reede, twelue thousande furlonges: and $\frac{1}{2}$ length, the breaddth and the heygth of it are equale. &c.

NOW followeth the forme and measure of the citie, and the forme thereof is most fyne and stable that is to say foure square and cuby call, of which forme some of the olde philosophers did thinke the earth to be, for the vnmoueablenes of the same. Moreover we learne by this forme to Imagen nothinge earthlye of this city, for the heyghte of no city is so large as the length and breaddth thereof. The measure if we count the greatnes, which is of twelue thousande furlonges, that is 1500. miles commendeth the largenes and capacitye of the city, whiche is great inough to the commodious dwellinge of all the citizens. If we consider the propoztion of the number, it clearly conteineth that most beuotifull concoorde in propoztio which we noted before often to be expessed in the number of twelue.

Uers. 17. And he measured the walls thereof an hundredeth forty and foure cubites, by the measure of man, that is of the aungell. &c.

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The measure also of the heighte of the wall is to be noted, both in the quantitie of the largenesse, and also of the number. For the great height thereof declareth, y^e the defence thereof is safe enough against all the engins of the aduersaries. And the number 144. riseth of twelue multiplied in it selfe, of which what is to be gathered, wee haue expounded otherwhere, but in this measure, least wee should accordinge to the small proportion of our bodie, measure the cubites, Iohn sheweth that they were not the cubites of men, but of the Angell, which appeared in shape of man, but hee exceeded in wonderfull greatness and farre about the stature of man.

Uers. 18.

And the buylding of the wall of it was of Iasper. &c.

Of the twelue foundations riseth the buyldinge of the wall, which is to be compared to the most beautifull shining and varietie of the Iasper. For as the Iasper cōtēneth in it selfe, the diuers coloures of all precious stones, so of those twelue most precious stones, whiche signifie the doctrine of all the Apostles is this wall buylded, and seeme th to be compacte of a most beautifull composition.

And the citie was pure golde like vnto cleare glasse. &c. The buyldinge of the whole Citie is aunswerable to the beautie of the wall, whiche is all shininge and glitteringe of most pure golde, and that which is moze beautifull shininge through as moste cleare glasse. No earthely glorie maye be compared to this. Let vs therefore, neglectinge the colour of this grosse mettall, whiche among vs is most precious feruently desyre this beautifull riches for the heauenlye golde is through shininge.

Uers. 19. And the foundations of the wall of the citie were garnished, with all maner of precious stones, the first foundation was Iasper, the seconde of Saphire, the thirde of a Chalcedonie, the fourth of an Emerale. &c.

We knowe that the twelue precious stones in y^e best place of Aaron signified so manye tribes, but here we are before admonished, that the 12. foundations haue the names of the 12. Apostles written in them, which are y^e 12. Patriarches of

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the Church, collected as well of the Jewes as of the gentils. In these are sundry & precious giftes of God, but yet all applied to the buylding vp of one temple. If there be any thinge therefore in precious stones, that is shining and precious, if there be any beautie and vertue, they shall all be found abundantly in these foundations. Men do greatly esteeme small peeces and sparcke of precious stones, therefore what glorie of riches is there where the greatest foundations of the walles, consist of whole precious stones? But to reason moze subtilly concerninge the colours and properties of euerie of the precious stones, seemeth to me moze curious then necessarie. I had rather therefore, briefly & with sobyietie dispute of them all, then subtilly and curiously.

Uers. 21. The twelue gates were twelue pearles, and euerie gate is of one pearle, & the streete of the citie is pure gold as shining glasse.

The wonderfull beautie of the gates is described which consisteth euerie of a whole pearle howe small a portion of these gates was that pearle of Cleopatra, which was so much magnified among wyters, if it should be compared to this greatness. All these thinges pertain to the describing of the magnificence and beautie of this citie, vnder the figure whereof is shadowed the most swete and blessed dwelling of the faithfull with God, which shall be after the resurrection. And the street of the citie is pure golde like shining glasse. we may coniecture euen by this, howe great the beautie, and magnificence, howe great the riches, and howe precious the furniture is of the other partes of the citie, that the verie street also of this citie, is paved with that heauenlye and shining golde. He that shall conceyue these riches in his minde, shall easily contemne that small poupe of gold, precious stones and pearles, which euen the most mightie Emperours could euer shew. Neither can pouertie be burdenous to him, which is perswaded that so great treasures of riches are layed vp for him in heauen.

Uers. 22. And I sawe no temple in it, for the Lord God almighty and the lambe are the temple of it. &c.

The

The temple of Salomō, was the chiefe ornament of the old Ierusalem, but of this heauenly Ierusalem, the temple is no parte, but the whole Citie is the temple of god and Christ. Yea verilye, God, & Christ are sayed to be the temple thereof, whose presence is spred ouer the whole bodie of y^e Church. For the holpe religion and worship of God, is not shut into one corner or streat, but ouer the whole citie, which is the seat of God, and of our sauour Christ. whome verely without the outward sacramentes of his presence, cleauinge vnto him in verie deed, we shall know not in a glasse or a darcke speakinge but manifestly, and perfectlye. And this place fighteth against those prophane dogges, whiche denye the diuinitie of oure sauour Christ. For he to whome equall glozie of the temple perteyneth, with God, can be none other but eternall God, but Christ, with god almightie is the temple of the blessed citie, & to bee worshipped with equall honour with the father, therefore he is god almightie. which thing also he performeth euē now to his Church, being a stranger as yet in earth, to which he hath promised his presence euē vntill the end of the world. For god dwelleth not in a temple made with handes, of which sort was that temple of Salomō, but spreadeth forth him selfe by the presence of his goodnes euerie where through y^e whole Church. Althoughe now we see him vnperfectly, yet when these times shall come, all signes being taken awaye, and also all stoppes whatsoeuer, we shall see him as he is, and we shall knowe him euē as we are known of him.

Reuel. 23. And this citie hath no neede of the sunne, neither of the moone to lighten it: for the glozie of God did light it: and the lambe is the light of it. &c.

VWhat neede should there be of the Sunne, or the moone? where euerie one of the Iust shall shine as the sunne, where (as I saye) the glozie of God, and the brightnesse of Christ, shall shewe it selfe openly. Verelye the sunne and the starres, as it were through certen riftes of heauen, do exhibite vnto vs scarcely the least sparkes of Gods glozie to be seene. And when as we shalbe partakers of Gods glozie, the shining

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of the sunne and the moone shall seeme darcke. And the holye ghost alludeth to those thinges which the prophete Esay in the 60. Chap. prophetieth concerning the renewing of the Church.

Uers. 24. And the people which are saved shall walke in the lighte of it. &c.

The earthly Ierusalem did abhorre and deteste all the gentiles as prophane, but the heauenlye Ierusalem doeth acknowledge them for the Citizens being purged and sanctified in Christ, & not vnwillinglye doth admitte them into the partaking of her happinesse.

And the kinges of the earthe shall bringe there glorie vnto it. &c. Not only the comon people of the gentiles shabe receyued, but also kinges them selues shall laye downe their glorie in it, and shall liue in equall condition with the rest, not that they shall lose any parte of there glorie, for they shalbe all kinges, which shalbe partakers of the heauely kingdom, but because, if there be any gloze in kinges, the same shalbe comon to all the godly. Kinges and Magistrates therefore are not shut out of the heauenly citie as the Anabaptistes do dreame.

Uers. 25. And the gates of it shall not be shut by daye: for there shalbe no night. &c.

They liue safe and withoute care in that citie, for they feare no hurte of the aduersaries, which neuer shut the gates: & verely the cities in earthe excepte they be besieged shut not the gates by day time. but in the nighte they are locked for sodaine assaults or inuasions. But where there is no nighte but continuall day, there the gates are alwaies open. For the Citizens beinge furnished with the safegarde of the moste mightie god feare not any besieginge or sodayne assaulte.

Uers. 26. And the glorie & honour of y Gentiles shalbe brought vnto it.

That we might want nothing which we desire, whiche seemeth pleasaunt or gloriouse vnto vs in this life, he sheweth that all the glorie of y gentiles shalbe heaped vp into this Citie. Not that any thing can be added to set forth the glorie of god which by it selfe is heighest and greatest, but because wee shalbe beyres of the world and of all good thinges.

And

Uers. 27. And there shall enter into it none vncleane thing, neither whatsoeuer worketh abomination or lies: but they which are written in the Lambes booke of life. &c.

Althoughe the gates are alwaies open, yet there shalbe no passage in for the reprobate, bycause they defile all thinges with there prophane touching, and they which committe detestable abominatiōs, and reioyce in lies and hypocrisie, but for the electe seruauntes of god onely, and they which are sanctified in the bloude of Christ, we may note here that sanctificatiō can not bee separated from the eternall predestination of god. For they are not written in the booke of life, whiche alwayes geuinge ouer them selues to lies and wickednesse, doe neuer thinke of newnesse of life.



¶ The twentye & two Chap.



The perpetuall stablenes of the eternall felicity of the blessed is described in the beginning of this Chap. by the perpetuall founteyn of the water of life and by the tree of life bearing fruite euery moneth. Then after followethe the conclusion of this prophetic, to which auctoritie is procured, both of the person of him, which uttered it, as also of the person of him which receyued it.

Uers. 1. And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, cleare as Crystall proceeding out of the throne of God and of the lambe. &c.

The state & condition of mā might haue seemed blessed enough, when straight after his creation he was placed in his garden of Eden, which was most plentiful in all delights of pleasure. But his banishment was more bitter than any death. For to haue ben happye is most wretched. But after we shalbe receyued into this heauely paradise, we shall neuer be cast downe from his top, or
 begghe:

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heighte of blessednesse, for neither sinne, banishmente neither death, shalbe to be feared. Therefore sainte Ihon sayeth, that the Angell which vttered these misteries, shewed him a most pure riuer of water of life cleare as cristall proceeding out of the throne of God & the lake that earthly paradise had a riuer of most hollesome water, which should water the garden on euerie side, and make it most fruitfull of all thinges, which are required to a happie life Gene. 2. Yet muche more delectable and hollesome was that fountayne of moste pure water whiche Ezechiel sawe flowing out of the temple, in the Chapter 47. By which the renewing of the Church is described But this riuer flowing out not of the earth, nor out of the temple of Ierusalem, but oute of the throne of God almightie and of his Christ, doth minister the ioyes of eternall life most abundantly to the Citizens of the new Ierusalem. They therefore need neuer feare death, which drinke dayly of the riuer of the water of life. Neither can sorowe or anye griefe happen to those, which drawe water oute of the moste pure founteynes of this riuer, which are more cleare then anye crysell. For the purenesse, and clearenesse of this water is opposed to those troublesome riuers and muddie waters, of whiche wretched men doe quenche there thirst, and afterwarde are subiected to sundrie calamities and diseases. For nothing that is pure or synnere is bred in the earth. would God therefore we would detenne the muddie and vnpleasaunte waters of this worlde, wherby with greater and seruenter desire, we may pantinglye breathe after the heauenlye waters, euen like the harte, whiche Dauid speaketh of, boylinge with the heate of the sunne, with runninge and poison. Moreouer when as this water is sayed to flow out of the throne of god and Christ, we are admonished that eternall life doth flowe vnto vs from god alone, being reconciled vnto vs by Christ. Moreouer the madnesse of the Ariens is abundantly confuted, which enuie Christ equall dignitie with the father, when as here there is sayd to be the selfe same throne of god the father and of his sonne Christ, wherfore there is the same glorie, maiestie and power, for the throne

is a signe of the glorie and maiestie of God.

Act. 2. In the middelt of the streete of it and of either syde of the river was the tree of life which bare twelue maner of frutes and gaue fruite euery moneth. &c.

In the earthly paradise, there was one onely tree of life in the middelt of the garde which was a sacramēt & pledge of blessed & eternall life, if they should stand in the obedience of God & when man was cast out of the garde, together he was deprived of this signe of eternall life. **Gen. 3.** But after he shall be receined into this heavenly blessednes, he shall eate of this fruite of the tree of life for euer. For to all the citizens of new Ierusalem, access shall be open to this tree of life, which shall spring forth the most happily, not in one corner only of the citie, but in this middelt of the street & of either side of the river. And least we should feare the course of winter and sommer, such as is with vs, euery moneth shall be autumne, and shall yeld and minister the abundance of most sweete frutes. Also if varietie haue any pleasure in it, it shall be so great, that no lothinge or wearinesse of the meate, can neuer come vpon them for euery moneth shall abound with new delights of diuers and sundrie frutes.

And the leaues of the wood serued to heale the gentils. &c. There is no doubt but that this tree doth represent Christ, by whose vertue all these woudes & diseases of these gentils are healed. But it is worthy considering, how great force there is in this fruite it selfe to life euerlasting, when as these leaues of the tree would suffice to heale so manifolde & those so deadly diseases, of these gentils. But wherefore are these leaues attributed to this healing of gentils rather then the Jewes, when as all haue perished alike, & haue neede of medicine? It is certeyne that the first place is alwaies geuen to the Jewes, for the conenaunt **G O D** made with Abraham, whome neuerthelesse the Gentils followe in there order. For Christ is the common saluation to all men, althoughe in the first place to the Jewes and then to the gentils. And it shall not vnaptly agree, if wee say that the leaues of the tree are take for the hope of eternall life, which we conceyue by the preachinge of the Gospell. For as leaues and flowers whiche neuer fall nor fade, doe promise timely frutes, so by

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so by the faith of the Gospell, we haue the most certen hope of eternall life, whose most abundant fruite wee shall receyue, when as that redeemer of ours shall appeare. And Saincte Ihon allunder the to the prophetic of Ezechiel Chapter 47. As we sayed befoze. who is able to comprehend in his minde, but euen the thousande parte of this happinesse of the blessed Citizens? If there be any delightes of the citie, they inhabite a citie most abundant of all pleasures, if there be any pleasure of the countrey, in the middest of the citie, the streames of the founteynes, and most acceptable shadowes of the woodes delight the minde. That whatsoener the Poetes haue sayned of the Gardens of the Hesperides, or of the Eliseau, yea if it were true, yet it deserueth not to be called a shadow of this felicitie. Therefore that must needes be an Iron breast, whiche is moued with no desire of the same.

Uers. 3. And there shalbe no moze curse, &c.

The moste miserable curse of the whole worlde, followed shortly after the most blessed state and condition of man in the earthly paradise so that the hyghest felicitie, was changed so cleanly into extream calamitie: but in the heauenly paradise, we neede not any moze to feare any curse, which should trouble the state of the blessednesse. The godly therefore shall haue perfecte and perpetuall ioye. Whereouer it is manifeste, what horrible curtings the lawe thundreth out againste the transgressours thereof yet that blessed seede of Abraham, in which all the nations of the earth are blessed, hath taken away all these curses. For seeing that curse is the sentence of Gods vengeance vpon sinners, now that sinne is taken awaye and abolished by Christ, all Gods curse is also taken away, & with the curse all kinde of euill whiche afflicteth miserable men with sundrie tormentes. Wighly therefore it is sayd Chapter. 21. and 4, Uerse: that teares, death, sorowe, labour, and crying are banished from the citie newe Ierusalem. This place oughte also to in flame in vs the desire of forsaking this worlde, which for sinne is subiecte to so manie curses of God, and that wee may wishe to be gathered to that number of the blessed ones,
which

which without any curse intoye perpetuall felicitie.

But the seat of God, and of the lambe shalbe in it. &c. The reason why no cursednesse can pearce to that citie, is, bycause the throne of God and of our Lord Iesus Christ, shall defend and kepe the same free from all curse. For when as the curse, as we haue noted before, is the execution of gods wrath, God sheweth him selfe pacified to these, in the midst of whome he doth vouchsafe to place the throne of his magnificence. And that lambe which was slayne from the beginning of the world which hath the throne of maiestie common with God the father, is he, whiche became the mediator, to drawe men out of the dungeon of malediction, and to bring them beinge purged with his blood, into the presence of God.

And his seruantes shall serue him. &c. Here is an other reason ioyned, why there shalbe no more curse. That is to say, bycause the seruantes of God, after this shall not be disobedient to the commaundementes of there Lorde, but shall yelde perfecte obedience vnto him. There shalbe no punishment therefore, where there shalbe no transgression of the law. But that seruitude shall not hinder, but that we maye also raigne with Christ our heade, for it shalbe no constrained subiection, suche as is seene in tyrannie, but a voluntarie submission, suche as is of sonnes to there Father, vnder whome they shall liue, neuertheless well and blessedly. And also to offer to God his due obedience, is a more gloriousse Empire thē all the Kingdomes of the world: according to that saying to serue god is to raigne. In vaine therfore proude men and those that are puffed vp in arrogancie, indenuour to make all thinges subiecte to them selues, when in the meane time they are founde rebels to God, which setteth himselfe against the proude, and vouchsafeth his grace onely to the humble.

Uers. 4.

And they shall see his face. &c.

The countenance of God is moste acceptable to all those, whiche loue him with sincere affection of godlinesse, & Dauid placeth the fulnesse of pleasures in it Psalme. 16. bycause whē god is mercifull nothing can be wanting to the full heap
of

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of felicitie. And S. Paule reasoneth magnifically of the beholding of his glorious countenance 1. Corint. 13. And to conclude there are fire hundredth testimonies of the holy scripture, by which all thinges happy and pleasaunt are promised, in the fauourable countenance of god. whome we shall behold, not as we do now as it were in a glasse or a darke speakinge, but face to face, with great delectation.

And his name shalbe in there foreheades. &c. They haue now also the name of God written in there foreheades, whom the Lord doth acknowledge for his owne, and will haue them to be knowne among men for his seruantes, but it doth not yet appeare of what sorte we shalbe. But after that Christ shal appeare we shalbe like vnto him, bycause we shall see him as hee is 1. Ihon. 3. And then it shall playnly appeare what reward is layed vp for the faithfull seruantes of God.

Uers. 5. And there shalbe no night, and they need no candle, neither lighte of the sunne: for the lord God geueth them light.

In the presence of God, with whome there is no shadowing of clearenesse, there shalbe no changeable course of daye, and nighte. The sunne of righteousness and glorie neuer goethe downe to this citie, as the Angell shewed before also, Chap. 21. Uers. 23. and 25.

And they shall raigne for euer more. &c. Nowe he playnly expresseth that the seruitude of the sonnes of God, is not repugnant to the Kingdome, which is promised them. Together in one woorde he comprehendeth all there happinesse, that they shall raigne for euer more. In this place the ignorance of the Chiliastes is throughly confuted, bycause the electe shall raigne not for a thousande yeares, but for euer, and it doth sufficiently declare that those thousand yeares in the 20. Chapter are otherwise to be expounded, then of the states of the blessed after this lyfe.

Uers. 6. And he sayde vnto me these sayinges are saythfull & true. &c.

Now followeth the conclusion of this prophete, in which authoritie and reuerence, is gotten to this doctrine, by manye meanes; for first the Angell which uttered the misteries

ries, maketh his preface, that these sayings are true & worthy to be beleued, which thing when he hath done once or twice before, now he doth it chiefly to increase the hope of heavenly rewardes in vs. For we knowe howe hardly the minde of mā doth suffer it selfe to be pluckt from the beholdinge of thinges presente, whether they bee prosperous, or aduerse, that they mighte conceyue and nourish new hope of eternall life. Therefore the Angell repeateth, that these promises are proceeded from him whiche can not deceyue, as hee can not be deceyued, wherefore without great iniurie of him we can not doubt, concerning the faithfullnesse and truth of these thinges.

And the lord God of the holy prophetes, sente his Angell to shew vnto his seruantes, the thinges which must shortly be fulfilled. &c. That same God, which spake by the mouth of all the Ancient prophetes of whome the authenticke is moste holy in the Church, is the authour of this propheticke. we must not therefore with the lesse reuerence embrace the same, then the oracles of the moste holy prophetes, whose ende hath proued their faithfullnesse. And least we should esteeme any thing more basely in the maner of the reuealing, God hath sent his Angell, whiche shoulde shewe to his seruantes, the thinges which shoulde shortly come to pas. Concerning which chaunce, because there is enoughe sayed, in the Chapter 1. Verse 1. I passe ouer many thinges.

Verf. 7. Beholde I come shortly: happy is he that kepeth the sayinge of this propheticke. &c.

For the greater credite, Christ him selfe is brought in speaking, and promissing the certeyntie and speedinesse of his coming, in which the effecte of Gods promises, shall take place in all the godly. But in the meane time he layeth vp the doctrine of this propheticke with them as a passing great treasure, whose wordes if they will diligently imprinte in mind, & kepe the so imprinted, he pronounceth that they shalbe blessed. Neither shall the perils hanging ouer the Church oppress them with waues or vnpreparedness: neither shall there faile be overabundantly with any homines of temptations: neither shall there simplicitie be

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cie be deceyved wiche the pestiferouse illusions of Antichrist, & euen in the middell of death they shall nourishe the most assured hope of eternall life, the fruite whereof at length in the reckninge of Christ, shall manifestly declare forth it selfe, to establish the perpetuall felicity vnto them.

Act. 8.

And I am John which saw these thinges
and herd them, &c.

NOW of his owne persone, he procureth authoritie, and credit to this propheticke: For leaste it might seme to haue proceeded from some franticke false prophet, or diuine inspired person: St. John testifieth, that it was him selfe whiche hath sene these thinges which were deliuered vnto him after the manner of a vision and hath heard these things which the holy ghost commanded to be written. And we know sufficiently by the historie, how famous, the name of Saint John, and how holpe his authoritie was amonge these Churches; to whose custodie this booke was committed. But that some doe coniecture, that this John was surnamed marke whiche ministered to the Apostles Paule and Barnabas: It seemeth not to me agreable, both for other reasons, and also euen of that, that so often he nameth him selfe John without the addition of the surname Marke, which thinge it is very like that he would not haue omitted, seeinge this onely mighte make for difference: And it was the purpose of John to bringe forth the authoritie of his name. But that other John seemed to haue bene more known by the name of Marke then of John, whom Paule calleth the kinsman of Barnabas, Coll. 4. of whom also he maketh mention 2. Tim. And also in the Epistle to Philemon, whom they thinke to be the very same which wrote the Gospell which is intituled the gospell after St. Marke.

And when I had hearde and seene I fell downe, to worships before the feete of the Aungell, whiche shewed me those thinges. &c. Sainte John doth not hyde or dissemble his owne faulte, that he hath suffered himselfe now twice for the excellencie of the persone of the Aungell, to be drawne
awaye

awaye to geue the honour that is due to God alone to a creature. wher vpon may be gathered the weaknes and frailtie of man, so ready to Idolatrie, when so great an Apostle dashed his foote twise against the same stone. For coner we may note what kinde of honour hee gaue to the Aungell, when hee fell vpon his face, for that soude distinction (whiche the papistes make) of ἁγία, and ἄνα. For he would not worshippinge the Aungell for God, whome hee knewe suerlye enough to be an Aungell and not G O D, but hee thought religiously to exhibite some reuerence and honour, as to a heauenly creature. which neuerthelesse the Aungell by no meanes doth allowe.

Verf. 9. But he sayed vnto me, see thou doe it not, for I am thy fellow seruaunt, and the fellow seruaunte of thy brethren the prophetes, and of them which kepe the sayings of this booke: worshippinge God. &c.

This forbiddinge is grounded vpon two reasons, firste that it is not equall for a seruaunte to be extolled with ambitious honour of his fellowe seruauntes. For hee confesseth him selfe to bee the fellowe seruaunte, not of John onely, but also of all his brethren the prophetes, that is of all the preachers of the Gospell, and not of these onely, but of those also, which kepe the sayings of this booke, that is, of all the faithfull. The seconde reason, that is an vnworthie acte, that the creature shoulde attempte to drawe to him selfe the honour of adoration, whiche is proper to God alone. And there is no doubt, but that all the Saintes departed this lyfe, are of the same minde, that they refuse the importunate honours, whiche foliſhe men offer vnto them, and desire to haue God worshipped alone with all kinde of worshippe. The papistes therefore doe verie great iniurie to the Saintes, whiles they obtrude suche thinges vpon the, not onely, such which can be coloured by the fond deuile of ἄνα, but which corepne manifest Idolatrie. whiles they do not onely set vp Images vnto them, and worshippinge the same, but also erect temples, and they appoint feastes in all ciues, for them, then which thinges what

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can be moze wicked.

Uers. 10. And he said vnto me, seale not the sayinges of the prophesye of this booke, for the tyme is at hande. &c.

Because so many secreat & holy misteries of god are revealed in this booke. Sainct Iohn mighte haue doubted, whether he shoulde publishe them or not but that he had bene flatlye forbidden, by the heauensly oracle, to seale vp the sayings of the booke of this prophesye, as if it were certaine vnspeakeable wordes, Although an other reason also is added that is to say that the time was at hande, in whiche this prophesye shoulde take effect. For euen then did the misterye of iniquity worke, and prepared the waye for Antichrist 2. thess. 2. Chapter. Wherefore euen then was the vse of this Reuelation in the Church. Daniell and other prophets were commaunded to seale vp many thinges, the execution whereof shoulde be deferred alonge time after. But S. Iohn is forbidden to seale vp the sayinges of this prophesye, because the time of there fulfillingge was at hande. And this place dothe abundantlye confute the follye of those, which thinke that nothinge is conteyned in this booke, but doubtfull and darke speakinges, oute of whiche we can drawe nothinge that is certeyne or determinate. For the sayinges of this prophesie are not sealed, but that the godly and diligent reader maye vnderstande very many thinges very profitable to be knowen. For the holy ghost committerh nothinge to wyting in vaine, so that we come soberly and reuerentlye, as it is meete to so great misteryes, to expounde the same.

Uers. 11. 12. He that is vniust let him be vniust still, and he that is filthy let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous let him be righteous still and he that is holy let him be holy still. &c.

And beholde I come shortly and my reward is with me to geue every man accordyng as his worke shalbe. &c.

Least the mindes of the godly shoulde be broken with ycker-somenes, by continuance of so greate enils, Christ againe stirreth vp the hope of his comminge not longe to be differred, that by the vpyghtenesse of his Judgemente, hee maye re-
store

foze into order althings which are now confused and oute of order, that is that he may apointe, rewarde for the godly and punnishmentes for the wicked, for we see that the greater part of men do boast them selues in wronge dealinges, and bringe geuen to the enticements of filthy pleasures, boast y all things are latofull for them to doe, so longe as God dothe not thunder from heauen against there vngodlines. And hypocrites thinke that they can pleasantly mocke both God and men. In these so great corruptions and offences, it is harde for the godly to re-
taine and kepe there godlines, least that either they shoulde be hurt by example, or shoulde be overcome with iniuries, or shoulde be offended at the prosperite of the wicked. Therfore Christ confirmeth the godly and holyc ones, that they shoulde not by any meanes departe from there holynes and innocencye of maners for neither shall the wicked beare there stunes without punnishmente, neither shall the godlye want there rewarde, seeinge he will shortly come, and will geue to euery one such rewarde as his woorkes require, but as concerninge the merites of good woorkes, there is no neede to shew here what is to be thoughte, seeinge it is expounded often otherwhere. For rewarde are geuen by the mercy of God, and not as due for good woorkes, seeinge we are debitorours to fulfill the whole lawe if we will require rewarde for the deserts of oure woorkes.

Verf. 13. I am Alpha & Omega, y beginning & the end the first & the last.
That we maye beleue that nothinge is surer then this doctrine concerning y rewarde of the good, and punnishmentes of the reprobate, y vncchangeable decre of god is interposed, y is to say, that this is y sentence of him, which is alpha and Omega the beginninge and the ende, that is y eternall Jehoua, of whom all things haue there beinge, and to whome all things are referred which a loine is without beginning and without ende of him self. He hath giuen eternitie to other things beinge his creatures to which he woulde.

Verf. 14. Blessed are they that do his comādemētes, that there righte maye bein the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the Citye.

Is a blessed seruitude to obey his comādemētes, which
Al. 14. dothe

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doeth adorne with so great rewardes those that herken vnto him, & hath determined so horrible punishments against the rebellious and stubborne. For as many as obey his commaundementes, shalbe satisfied with the fruite of the tree of life, from eating whereof our firste parentes were deprived for there disobedience. And so free accesse shalbe open through the gates into the citie, to the Citizens of the newe and heauenly Ierusalem which the rebellious Adā was banished with all posteritie.

Uers. 15. For without shalbe dogges, and enchauntes, and whores, mongers, and murtherers, & Idolatours, and whatsoeuer loueth or maketh lyes. &c.

These verely which being deceyued with the enticements of this world, had rather be inhabitantes of the cursed earth, carelesly condemning the preceptes of God, they haue no right in the holy citie, into which nothing that is prophane or vnpure shall enter. Not dogges whiche in madnesse rage against those which cast holy thinges before them. Not wicked inchanters, which abuse the sacred name of God, to deuillish impietie. Not fornicatours, nor adulterours, which haue defiled the selues with filthie lustes, like swine. Not murtherers, whiche like wild beastes do thirst after the bloud of men. Not Idolatours, which frame to the selues newe Gods, with most great and horrible inturie of the onely true God. Not false hypocrites, nor lying heretiques, the Authoers of false opinions, neither they which willingly apply there eares to such delusions, shall haue place in the holy citie, in whiche dwelleth holinesse, cleanes, charitie and truethe. And least we should Iماغن a meane of some certeyne thirde place of state betwene, the chiefest felicitie and extreme miserie, he placeth all the wicked without the citie, whome before in the 21. Chapter hee cast into the lake of fire and brimstone. Away therefore with those fables of the papistes, concerning those places which they call Limbus of fathers and of children not baptized with other monstrous lyes of the same sort, which idle belies and well fed, paunches haue dreamed. For they whiche are without the citie are moste miserable, not onely because they wante those good thinges whiche the Citizens of it do intoye in her, but also because

cause they shalbe tormēted with the eternall tormētes of hell.
 Aert. 16. I Iesus haue sente mine Angell to testifie vnto you
 these thinges in the Churches. &c.

Nowe Iesus Christ doth plainly and without anye allegorically darckenes confesse y he is the aucthour of this propheticke, whiche sending his Angell hath opened it to Iohn after the maner of a reuelation, to the great profite and commodity of the whole Church. Admonishing also in the ende. Those seuen Churches of Asia, with which this treasure shold be reposed, like as he did in the beginning, howe great honour he hath bestowed vpon them, that he wold appointe them keepers and witnesses of this reuelation. And how necessarie this admonition was, we may well perceyue by this that the deuill hath made all the assautes he could againste the auctorite of this propheticke, that y subtilties of Antichrist mighte the better be cloked which in this reuelation are clearly discovered. Wherevpon this booke was very negligently kepte in the olde time notwithstanding the Christ commaunded it should be preserved with great diligence.

I am the rote and generation of David and the brighte morning starre. &c. That those thinges mighte bee ratified with the goodly, which he hath spoken concerninge the blessednesse to come: Christ professeth him selfe to be the rote and generation of David, to whome that eternall and moste blessed Kingdome is appointed, by the propheties of all the prophetes. That he is that brighte and morning starre, whiche promisseth that the daye of moste cleare lighte shall shortly come, when as all darckenesse beinge diuē awaye, the faithfull shall intope perpetuall lighte.

Aert. 17. And the spirit and the bride say come. &c.

So soone as Christ geueth the hope of his coming, by and by that spirit, whiche helpeth oure infirmities, and maketh intercession for the Saintes with gronings that are unspeakable, with y whole Church, which is the spouse of Christ, as it were goinge forth to meete him and embrace him, shee brusteth forth into this voice of prayer. Come, and do not deferre thy coming.

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And let him that heareth, saye come : and let him that is a thirst come : and let whosoever will , take of the water of life freely. &c. Those that are the prayers of the whole Church, the same oughte to bee the prayers of euery seuerall person, therefore the holpe ghost doeth exhort euery one that heareth this prophetic, to loue the coming of Christ, and to pray diligently for it, and Christ that he maye comforte his seruantes, euen in the middle course of this life . giveth freelye by saythe the waters of eternall life to all that thirst. But hee seemeth to attribute eternall life to oure will. Be that will (sayeth he) let him take. It is true, but yet that any may will, it becometh him to be prevented by the grace of God. Although we oughte not to vnderstande, the will for some lighte motion of the will, but rather for that ardent desire, which he hath expressed before by thirst: suche a will excepte it be framed of God is in no man, by nature. For it is neither of him that willeth, nor of him that turneth but of God that sheweth merrie. Rom. 9.

Uers. 18. For I protest to euery man that heareth the wordes of the Prophetic of this booke, if any man shall adde vnto these thinges, God shall adde vnto him the plagues that are written in this booke. &c.

Uers. 19. And if any man shall minishe, of the wordes of the booke of this prophetic, God shall take away his parte out of the booke of life, and out of the holy citie, and from those thinges whiche are written in this booke. &c.

The holpe ghost for knowinge the controuersies whiche the deuill would raise vpon concerning the auctoritie of this prophetic, moueth and inforceth S. John to seale the same with a most waigherie protestation. And yet neuerthelesse Sathā hath leste nothing vndone against it, but all in vaine. Wherefore that the auctoritie thereof mighte be established equall with the other oracles of God, to whiche it is lawfull to adde nothing, neither to take any thinge from them, he threatneth horrible punishments to those, which shalbe so bolde as to attempte any such thinge against this prophetic. That he sayeth his part shalbe taken oute of the booke of life, hee meaneth not that he had a part in it before, but he followeth the Antichesis, seeing before he had spoken of adding.

Act. 20. He that testifieth these thinges sayeth suerly I come quickly. Amen, even so come Lord Iesus. &c.

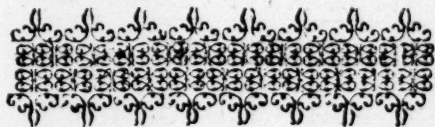
That it might not seeme to be the prorestation of a man onely, when as men often times in vaine caste for the horrible thunder boltes of thycatninges, Christ him selfe for confirmatio sake doth subscribe, and promiseth that he will come shortly, that by effect he may ratifie these decrees. Saincte Iohn maketh aunswere in the name of the whole fellowship of the faithfull. Sayinge Amen, come Lord Iesus make an ende of all calamities of the Church, that the glozie may shine ouer all thinges, and the faithfull may obtrayne the promised inheritance.

Act. 21. The grace of oure Lord Iesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

He concludeth the Epistle which was sente in common, to the seuen Churches commendinge there health and saluation to the grace, of our Lord Iesus Christ.

The ende of the Commentaries of

William Fulke Doctor of Diuinitie, vpon the
sacred reuelation of Saincte Iohn.





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